

SOAS

19 December 1973
C7 ✓

~~To be returned to the
ACADEMIC REGISTRAR,
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON,
SENATE HOUSE, W.C.1.
with the Examiners Report~~

Ph. D. (Oriental & African languages &
literatures) 1973

ProQuest Number: 10672823

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10672823

Published by ProQuest LLC (2017). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

The Language of Sinhalese Fiction, 1860 - 1970.

By

Udaya Prasanta Meddegama

Thesis Presented for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the University of London.

School of Oriental and African Studies
University of London

September 1973.



A b s t r a c t

The aim of this study is to examine the evolution of the language of Sinhalese fiction from 1860 - 1970. As there is a large number of authors in this period, our attempt will be only to deal with prose fiction. The prose romances of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century, and the novels of the modern times are discussed and analysed with regard to themes, subject-matter, influence of foreign authors and the language. In our analyses of the language of fiction, it must be made clear, we will not be approaching from a purely linguistic point of view, but rather from an aesthetic and literary point of view.

As most of the early writers of Sinhalese fiction used the styles of classical prose and some modern novelists also draw inspiration from it, an attempt is made at the beginning of this study to present a brief history of Sinhalese prose from earliest times up to the early nineteenth century. In chapter 2 we will be examining the contribution of the Sinhalese Christian writers to the language and various aspects of the literary revival in the nineteenth century as regards the development of the language. From chapter 3, we will be discussing the nature and evolution of Sinhalese fiction, its language, the attitudes of the early readership towards fiction and the appearance

III

of the novel proper after the second world war. As the form of fiction underwent new changes after this period its language too followed suit to become a medium suitable to express the ideas and experiences of the modern times.

The evolution and development of the language of Sinhalese fiction will be examined in our study with synopses from selected works of fiction, analyses and comparisons of themes and techniques and with extracts exemplifying and illustrating the gradual development of the language as a rich and powerful medium to express the complicated human problems, the consciousness and the experiences of the modern age.

Acknowledgements

First of all, I should like to thank my supervisor of studies, Mr. C.H.B. Reynolds for all his patience and kind attention and for all the friendly guidance I have received from him during my research work at London University.

I should also like to thank Professor E.R. Saratchandra of the University of Sri Lanka who suggested the subject and Mr. Saratchandra Wickramasuriya, of the same University, who helped me to decide upon the chronological limits of this particular study.

I am also grateful to my friend, Chandralal Kumarasiri, who, over the past three years, has kept me in touch with literary developments in Ceylon, and to Dr. Gunapala Dhamasiri who has supplied me with important biographical information about some of the novelists discussed here.

To Mr. Donald Convey and Mr. Arun Gadgil of King's college, London, and to Mr. Ronald Farrow of the BBC External Services, I am indebted for help in reading some of the chapters and for making several important suggestions. The Ven. Y. Dhammapala has been of great assistance in checking the typescript.

I also benefited from many discussions with my friend, Dr. Sunanda de Mel, who intorduced me to some aspects of world literature with which I had previously been unfamiliar.

Finally, a debt of gratitude goes to Mr. Mohamed Shareef, of the Maldive Islands, who has typed this thesis as a sign of our friendship.

C O N T E N T S

	Page:
Abstract	2
Acknowledgements	4
Chapter I	7
" II	59
" III	126
" IV	277
" V	372
Conclusion	485
Bibliography	488

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND OF SINHALESE FICTION

A survey of the evolution of Sinhalese prose.

In this chapter I propose to observe some of the historical factors concerning the evolution of Sinhalese prose from the earliest times of Sinhalese literature to the nineteenth century. Our main interest will be some important classical prose works which are representative of each literary period, and not poetic works, in accordance with the scope of this study. For a better understanding of the problem of the language of modern Sinhalese fiction, a general knowledge of literary aspects of classical Sinhalese prose will be most helpful. We must also emphasise the fact that our concern in this chapter will not be the presentation of a comprehensive historical survey of classical Sinhalese prose since such studies are already available.(1.)

Narratives in Classical Sinhalese Literature.

The history of Sinhalese literature can be traced back

-
- (1.) Wickramasingha, Martin. Simhala Sahityaya Nangima Colombo-1945.
Wickramasingha, Martin. Sinhalese Literature. Tr. by E.R. Saratchandre 1949.
Sannasgala, Puncibandara. Simhala Sahitya Vamsaya Col.1947
Godakumbura, C.E. Sinhalese Literature Colombo 1955.
Kulasuriya, Ananda. Simhala Sahityaya Vol. I & II
Maharagama 1961.

as far as the Anuradhapura period of Ceylon's history.

(3rd. century B.C. - 10th. century A.D.) Although it can be presumed that expression flourished even in the early part of the Anuradhapura period and some literary works were produced, no evidence of any of those works is extant today. A few works of great importance to the student of the history of Sinhalese prose, from the latter part of the Anuradhapura period are available.

Before going into a further discussion on these extant works from Anuradhapura period it is necessary to consider the other sources and evidence of literary activities in this period. These sources and evidence can be classified into three categories as follows:

- i. Inscriptions.
- ii. Commentaries and historical chronicles written in Pali, and
- iii. The extant Sinhalese works.

Hundreds of inscriptions scattered all over the island, dating from the 3rd. century B.C. are the best and earliest evidence of the existence of writing in Sinhalese. These inscriptions help us to trace the origin of the Sinhalese language and its evolution and development as a medium of literary expression. The inscriptions which belong to the early part of the Anuradhapura period are of great linguistic value but of no literary value as they consist of only a few words or in some cases a few sentences. The inscriptions began to be lengthy with time, and so some of them written during the

latter part of the Anuradhapura period provide us with a style comparable with that of the classical prose works written immediately after the Anuradhapura period, in the 12th. or 13th century. Among these many inscriptions the following can be mentioned here due to the significance of their language:

- i. Two Tablets of Mahinda iv at Mihintale.
- ii. Slab inscription of Kasyapa V, at Anuradhapura.
- iii. Slab inscription of Mahinda iv at Jetavanarama. (1.)

It will be a long task to consider passages from a number of important inscriptions, hence we will quote a passage from Kasyapa's inscription as the king himself is known as an author of some literary works:

"Maṅgul-sihasun-rak-gal-tala aray vajan-bera-sīnaynen
 ruṇu varanan ādi manda siṇḍā sī-pārākmen vājamba anat
 -apiriseyi somi -nimala -guna vaturen jiyal sanahayi
 sasun ariyū Lakdiv -polov -mehesana parapuren himi
 mapurum Buddas -Siri-Saṅgboy Abahay maharaj hat jā
 Sang Banday apa bisev rajniyan kushi heva dunu-sānā-
 hime yuva raj bisev siri pāmāna- yasa-tej- hir-sandnen
 lov pahayay siya vikmen saturan manda pala -nimala-
 kit-vaturen lov -at patul debiseva ja Salameyvan
 Abahay maharaj yutār Mirisiviṭi Saṅgsen-Aram Kasub
 -raj -maha-veher ari pansiyan vasvay sulab satar-

(1.) Epigraphia Zeylanica. London 1907 Vol. I, II.; Vol. I, III;
 Vol. I.

pasayen pujay sasun kot huvay āti- nakara Maṅgul -maha-
veyā ḍakun dor -asanhi raj-ved-hal karay rov biya samay
Podonavul Pulundāvulu -yen ket kam sulab koṭ siri Lak
loṇḍuruvay sā biya nivay rat-soyay sat biya nerā nānā
jāyin nan seyi Bud-band karay siyal isirayen pujay dā
sānen Bud-ruvan ariyay Dhamu-ruvan kavari seyakin pujanemi
ho yana adahas puray Abhidham desun kasun pat aravay
maha puja koṭā sasun siṭvami yana siṭ dolnen ājara paya
hamuyehi ē me dham desun viyakhan kala siya basnen Bud-
guna vanu rivi anvayen bat Saha -kula-kot Oka raj-kulat
tala tik apa purumuvo....."

('The great king Salameyvan Abahay was conceived in the
womb of our anointed queen Sang Banday, being born unto
his Majesty Buddas Siri Sangboy Abahay Maharaj, lord
(by right of) lineal descent of the great lords of the
soil of the island of Lanka; who promoted the (Buddhist)
religion, having comforted the people with showers of
(his) boundless, all-embracing, gentle and pure quali-
ties, and who flourished with the prowess of a lion,
having ascended his auspicious lion-throne which was
like unto a rock of safety, and having exhausted the
ichor-like pride of his elephant-like enemies with his
words which were like unto terrific roar of a lion.
(His Majesty) born of the twice anointed queen, received
at the very instant of his birth the auspicious unction
of yuvaraja(heir-apparent) and illumined the world with
the glory and the majesty of the sun and the moon. With
his own valour, he subdued enemies; and with the waters
of the unsullied fame (thus) wide-spread, he (anointed)
the hands and feet of his people.

He (re-) built the Mirisiviti(vehera), the Sangsen
Aram and the Kāsub-raj-maha-veher, caused five hundred
monks to reside, and honouring (them) with gifts of the
four priestly requisites, raised the standard of the

religion. By establishing royal medical halls near the southern gate of the auspicious high-street in the inner city he allayed the fear of disease, by affording facilities for the cultivation of fields by means of (the tanks) Podonavulu and Pulundavulu, he caused (this) illustrious Lanka to prosper, (and thus) dispelled the fear of famine. By inspecting the country, he removed the fear of enemies. In various ways he made converts to Buddhism from diverse nationalities, (and) made offerings out of all his wealth. By (celebrating) relic festivals, he honoured the Buddha-gem. In fulfilment of the resolution (appearing in his words) 'how shall I honour the Dhamma gem' he caused the Abhidhamma discourses to be transcribed on plates of gold (and therewith) made a great offering. Yearning in his heart to establish the Buddhist religion he preached that same Dhamma in the presence of (his) esteemed teacher, and extolled the virtues of the Buddha in his own language....' (1.)

The language in this inscription shows how the Sinhalese writers had begun to follow the lengthy, elaborate style of Sanskrit prose. But they had not yet begun to borrow Sanskrit words in great numbers. The use of teeming rhetoric in praise of the king, and the Buddha, can be taken as first signs of the formation of the eulogistic style which became popular later on in the works like Butsarana. The vocabulary in these inscriptions, in general, is not very different from that in the few prose works of the 10th century. The language of Dhampiya

(1.) Text and translation from Epigraphia Zeylanica, London. 1907
Vol. I. Part II pp. 41/52

Atuva Gatapadaya, the authorship of which is attributed to king Kassapa V, bears special resemblance to the language of this inscription. The king himself, as is mentioned in the inscriptions, made some commentaries in Sinhalese on Buddhism.

According to Geiger's classification of the history of Sinhalese language, the language of the 10th century belong to the mediaeval period(1.) It was during this period (from the 8th to the 13th century) that we can find the appearance of most of the aspects of modern Sinhalese.

In some of the Pali commentaries of Buddhaghosa and the historical chronicles such as the Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa, some evidence is found revealing the fact that the Sinhalese language was used for various kinds of religious writings from the earliest times of the establishment of the Buddhist order in the island. It is said that Ven. Mahinda pioneered the translation of the commentaries to the Buddhist scriptures from Magadhi (Pali) into Sinhalese in the 3rd century B.C. which were later known as Helaṭuvā(2.). These Sinhalese commentaries were in use until they were re-translated into Pali in the 5th century by Buddhaghosa. They were existing, however, for five or six centuries after this as some quotations from them are found in the *Asaṭṭhampiyā Aṭuvā Gāṭapadaya* of

-
- (1.) Geiger, Wilhelm. A Dictionary of the Sinhalese Language. Colombo 1935. Vol.I Part I. Introduction.
 (2.) Saratthappakasini, ed. F.L. Woodward. London 1929
 Papanca sudani. (Introductory verses) ed. Giridara Ratanajoti. Colombo 1898.

Mr. T. J. ...
 ...

Kasyapa V.(10th century). In most of the Pali Vamsakathas (historical chronicles) mention is made to their having been first written in Sinhalese. For example:

"Sadēsa-bhāsāya kavīhi sīhalē
Katampi vamsam jina-danta-dhātuyā
Niruttiyā māgadhikāya vuttiyā
Karōmi dīpantara-vāsinan api". (1.)

('The history of the tooth relic of the Lord, which has been composed by the poets of Sihala in their language, I shall translate into Magadhi for the benefit of the people of other lands too.')

If we accept these reports as historical facts we can assume that even in the early part of the Anuradhapura period the Sinhalese language had been in a sufficiently developed state to narrate various stories in Buddhist literature and to comment on the subtle points of Buddhism. It is in fact a great loss for the student of the history of Sinhalese literature that none of the Sinhalese works from that early period survive; yet we can only know that the language in which those works were written had been pleasant:

"Apanetvāna tatō aham Sīhalabhāsam manoramam bhāsam
tanti-naya-anucchavikam āropento vigatadosam"(2.)

('I shall translate it from the beautiful Sinhalese, language removing mistakes, into the Pali language'.)

Here Buddhaghosa refers to the Sinhalese commentaries or Helatuvas. He praises the language in which they were written

(1.) Dathavamsa. Stanza No.10. ed. Ananda. M. Colombo 1956

(2.) Buddhaghosa. Papanca sudani. ed. Ratnajoti. Giridara Colombo 1898. p.1.

as beautiful. To deserve such praise from a great foreign scholar like Buddhaghosa, the Sinhalese language must have been pleasant in sound and rich in expressive power. The efforts of Buddhaghosa were however not so favourable for the development of Sinhalese literature as they were for Pali literature. All the scholars of the country must have mainly concentrated on producing books in Pali after this time as it became the official language of the Theravada Buddhists. Thus Pali attained royal patronage causing Sinhalese to fall into a second place. And yet it was only through Sinhalese that the administrators and the clergy could approach the masses, so most of the royal declarations of decrees and special grants continued to be made in Sinhalese and the clergy and other writers on religion had to use Sinhalese for narrative and expository works for the benefit of the ordinary people.

The extant Sinhalese works from the late Anuradhapura period are, Dhampiya Atuva Gatapadaya, Sikhavalanda Vinisa and Siyabaslakara. The first of these three is a glossary to the Pali commentary, Dhammapadatthakatha, and the author is king Kasyapa V.(913-923A.D.). The language of this work is similar to that of the inscriptions of the 10th century and it also consists of various strata representing early, independent styles as well as the mixed style of later centuries which is abundant in loan words from Pali and Sanskrit.(1.)

(1.) Godakumbura, Charles. Sinhalese literature. Colombo 1955
pp. 31/33

The second prose work, *Sikhavalañḍa Vinisa* written about the same time as *Dhampiyā Aṭṭva Gāṭapadaya*, is a manual of disciplinary codes for Buddhist monks. Thus, quite expectably in a book of this nature, there are no descriptions of literary value. As far as the style is concerned this work is written in a lucid, simple and powerful language in which we may be able to trace a relationship to the style in a work like *Amavatura*.

The third work, *Siyabaslakara*, is a metrical composition on poetics. Opinions differ as to the authorship of this work though it is mentioned in the work itself that it was written by a certain king by the name of 'Salamevan'. Despite its being an adaptation of the Sanskrit work, *Kavyadarsa* by Dandin, *Siyabaslakara* readily shows the development of the language in clarity and sensitivity as a medium of literary expression. Through the evidence found in this work we can also gain knowledge of the kind of poems that existed in the Anuradhapura period. According to the author of *Siyabaslakara*, the only kind of poem that was lacking in Sinhalese literature by his time was 'Campu' (1.) This statement indicates that by the time *Siyabaslakara* was composed, most of the other kinds of poetry such as Mahakavya, Khanda kavya etc., must have been existing in Sinhalese. In the Sanskrit poetic tradition, both prose and verse were meant by the term 'kavya'.

(1.) *Siyabaslakara*. ed. Bentara Dhammasena. Colombo 1948.
Verse 13.

The type of poems called 'Campu', to which the author of Siyabaslakara wished to draw the attention of Sinhalese poets, is a mixed form of prose and verse. Thus we can assume that there must have been existing individual prose works at the time of this author, along with works of verse.

After the Anuradhapura period during which the works mentioned above were written, we come to the Polonnaruwa period of Ceylonese history which is of great significance concerning the development of Sinhalese prose. During this period (1017-1235 A.D.) and in the following centuries a number of books were produced some of which are mere exegetical works and others are important as works of literary value. It is this second kind of books which are known among the common people as 'maha bana katā pot' (Great books of virtuous sotries), which have inspired the Sinhalese writers through the centuries until today.

The popular stories narrated again and again in these prose works bear a close affinity with the ancient fiction of world literature. As Robert Scholes has observed, the word 'fiction' covers a large range of stories:

"A fiction is a made-up story. This definition covers a lot of territory. It includes the home-made lies we tell to protect ourselves from annoying scrutiny, and the casual jokes we hear and re-tell as polite or impolite conversation, as well as great visionary literature like Milton's Paradise Lost or the Bible itself". (1.)

(1.) Scholes, Robert. Elements of Fiction, Oxford University Press. 1968. p.1.

According to this definition of fiction we can easily include the Buddhist stories in Sinhalese classical prose works in the same category. Some of these stories are not made-up like usual fiction but are taken from folklore. Most of the stories about the present life of the Buddha and his disciples may be true or made-up ones whereas a large number of the Jataka stories are considered to be adaptations of pre-existing folk stories. A number of detailed studies have been carried out by various scholars on the development and nature of the Jatakas. Some of them have pointed out how the Jatakas have been developed into their present state by means of legends, Veda and Puranas. (1.) Whatever are the sources of these Buddhist stories, most of them carry some elements of human nature and realistic pictures of the social life of ancient India and Ceylon. The Sinhalese writers of later times, when they re-told these stories, fused them with their personal experience and attitudes causing them to be full of fact as well as fictitious elements, which may be taken as a prominent aspect even in modern fiction.

Among the classical prose works such works as Amavatura of Gurulugomi, Butsarana of Vidyacakravarti, Saddharma Ratna-

-
- (1.) Rhys Davids, Buddhist Birth Stories. London 1878
 De Gokuldas. Significance and Importance of Jatakas.
 Calcutta 1951.
 Sen, B.C. Studies in the Buddhist Jatakas. Calcutta 1930

valiya of Dharmasena and Pansiya Panas Jataka Pota are noteworthy as they include narratives of both religious and literary importance. Some other minor works such as Daham Sarana, Sanga Sarana, Thupavamsa etc., belonging to the period of 13-14th centuries, can be mentioned as attempts at narrating some interesting stories in a popular style.

Considering the perpetual popularity they have enjoyed among the masses, such works as Pūjāvaliya of Mayurapāda and Saddharmālankāraya of Jayabāhu Dharmakīrti, written in Daṁbadeni (1235-1283, A.D.) and Gampola (1334-1415, A.D.) periods respectively, deserve to be mentioned as two major prose works.

These and many other works of prose of varying degrees of literary value have been preserved by the Buddhist priests and ordinary people through the centuries out of the great respect for their contents and belief in the word of the Buddha. The ancient Sinhalese reader was never critical of these stories, but read and enjoyed them with many other villagers, and believed them to originate from the mouth of the Great Master. According to the long prevailing tradition the Buddhist monk always employs stories to illustrate his sermons. Thus not only for general reading purposes, but also for the benefit of the preacher the ancient Sinhalese writer had to narrate Buddhist stories.

Thus the authors of some of the extant prose works are priests themselves. This characteristic has led some modern critics to the conclusion that classical Sinhalese literature

was created by monks and that is why it is nothing but religion. This is only a superficial assumption. In ancient Ceylon, it is true that it was the clergy who mainly controlled education. The laity was not, however, prevented from learning and moreover, Buddhism is a religion based on wisdom and it always encouraged people to be intelligent. Probably a large section of the general masses in the island must have been unable to gain learning due to economic reasons. But the royalty was always the patrons of both religion and education, and they themselves acquired knowledge of various arts and sciences. A number of kings in ancient Ceylon have made their names known among the classical writers and generally the literary quality of their works is regarded in higher esteem today than that of the works by clergy. Two of the finest pieces of Sinhalese prose, Amavatura and Butsarana, are the works of lay-authors. Thus on a parallel with the clergy the laity too have been interested in the production of literature in Sinhalese. This fact leads us to think that there must be some other reasons for classical Sinhalese literature to be religious and devotional. According to basic disciplinary precepts in Theravada Buddhism the priests and earnest lay devotees are prevented from dancing, singing, playing musical instruments and all other kinds of worldly entertainments.(1.)

Again
in
Syll.

(1.) Dīgha Nikaya. Brahmajala Sutta. ed. T.W. Rhys Davids and J. Estlin Carpenter. Vol. I. London 1949. pp. 11-13

It was later considered that even poetry and drama were included among the 'mean sciences' ('tiracchina vijja') unsuitable for a monastic life.(1.) Thus the monks were prohibited from composing such songs or other forms of literature as would conduce to mere worldly pleasure and enjoyment. There is evidence in the history of Sinhalese literature that the monks took it for granted that they could produce compositions whose purpose was not temptation but edification. The Buddha himself was never an extremist as far as the arts were concerned as there are some occasions on which he granted permission for the enjoyment of things of aesthetic beauty.

It was on this religious background that a tradition grew up in Ceylon which encouraged the writers and poets to concentrate on themes and subject-matter drawn from Buddhist literature. This can be regarded as a reaction against the tradition of Sanskrit literature of exploiting Hinduism and its mythology. The Sinhalese poet was so attracted by Buddhist themes that he believed that the best result he could gain from his talent was by describing the life of Bodhisatta.(2.) He considered it as an act of merit, while the readers too

(1.) Daṁbadeṇi Katikāvata. Katikāvat Saṅgara. ed. D.B. Jayatilaka. Colombo. 1922. p.6.

(2.) Kavsilumina. King Parakramabahu. ed. Valivitage Sorata. Vellampitiya 1946. p.4. Verse 4.

expected to read books of religion believing it to be fruitful both in this and the next existence. Thus, under these circumstances the ancient Sinhalese writer, whether he belonged to the clergy or laity, was obliged to employ religious themes according to the tradition and requirements of society.

An interesting feature in classical Sinhalese prose works is the recurrence of the same story. This is not because of an inadequacy of the Buddhist repertoire to provide the Sinhalese writer with a sufficient number of stories, but due to the popularity as well as some special characteristics of a certain type of stories. Thus some Jataka stories such as Vessantara, Sasa and Kusa and the stories of the subjection of 'Angulimala', 'Alavaka' and 'Nalagiri', and the episode of the three daughters of Mara trying to tempt the Buddha were very popular and repeatedly narrated in classical Sinhalese literature. These and some other stories were apparently considered in popular tradition as more meritorious than the rest of the Buddhist stories and also they could be easily used to exhibit the Buddha's saintly as well as his superhuman powers. The significance of the recurrence of these stories is the divergent styles used by various writers to narrate them. Each successive writer tried to narrate these stories in his own style though the influence of the earlier styles is distinct in the styles of some later writers.

The styles of narrative of some important classical prose writers:

Gurulugomi's Amavatura may be regarded as the oldest

narrative prose available today. The terse, straightforward and simple style of this work has been highly admired by most writers on the history of Sinhalese literature. (1.) Gurulugomi makes a crisp blend of sporadic Sanskrit and Pali words with predominant Elu words (old Sinhalese words). He has not, nevertheless, allowed his style to be sonorous with Sanskrit words, unlike most other writers of the Polonnaruwa period.

Gurulugomi's style in Amavatura seems to be a blend of the plain language of the inscriptions of the Anuradhapura period and that of the explanatory works which are generally known as 'Parikathas'. Gurulugomi's other work, Dharmapradhipika, is itself a 'parikatha' in which an elaborative style has normally been employed, with the exception of the poetic style in a story like Sulu Kalingu. Godakumbura thinks that there is a third style also in Dharmapradipika, that is a 'middle way' of mixing the Sanskritized style and the Elu or the pure Sinhalese style. (2.) Unlike in Dharmapradipika, in Amavatura the author could employ one style throughout the work, as it is a collection of similar stories. Because of its similarity to the language of the inscriptions Wickramasingha has reached the following conclusion:

"The Amavatura of Gurulugomi is written in a style and

(1.) Godakumbura. op. cit. Chapter VII.

(2.) Godakumbura. op. cit. pp. 50/51.

a spirit which comes very near what might be called indigenous. His language is in essence the language of the inscriptions handled and modified by a great master". (1.)

We can agree with Wickramasingha as far as the first of these statements goes and as for the second, we have to modify it as the style of Gurulugomi is not only a masterfully handled and modified language of the inscriptions but also a mixture of the language of 'parikathas' and something closer to what we may suppose to have been the common speech in the late Anuradhapura and early Polonnaruwa periods.

Some of these aspects of Gurulugomi's style can be seen in the following passages:

"ācārya ovun tamā sanā ātiva banana sē dāka āya hā ohu sasaṅga āti sēyayi biṇḍī 'ohu marami' siti. 'idin ohu mārūyem vīm nam, disā pāmok āduru tamākara silpa ugannaṭa giya daruvan dos dākvā marayi kiya vaṭālā silpa ugannaṭa ennō noveti'. esē vannā hā maṭa lābha piriheyi. esē bāvin silpa samaharayaṭa upacārayayi kiya minis dahasak marannaṭa kiyami.' ēkāntayen eyin ekek ohu marayi sitā puta minis dahasak māruva mānava, esē vannā silpayāṭa upacārā kalāveyi kiya. api annaṭa himsā nokarana kulehi upannamha. esē nokaṭa hākkāyi kiya. silpayāṭa upacāra nokarannā palanodeyi putāyi kiya. hē pañcāyudhagena ācāryayā vāṇḍa aṭaviyaṭa vāḍa aṭaviyaṭa vadanā tanhidu, aṭaviṁadhyā yehidu aṭaviyen nikmena tanhidu sitā minisun marayi." (2.)

(1.) Wickramasingha, Martin. Sinhalese Literature. p.67

(2.) Gurulugomi, Amavatura. ed. Kodāgoḍa Gaṇanāloka, Colombo 1959. p.13.

('So when the teacher saw that they spoke as it were from kindness to himself, his heart was moved to quarrel; for he thought, there must be somewhat between him and her. Then he thought also: I must kill him. Yet if I kill him, it will be spread abroad how the chief teacher of the province finds faults with those that come to him to study learning; and thereby my profit will fail. Therefore I will say to him that he must now perform the final service to his studies by the slaying of a thousand men, for surely one of that multitude will slay him. So he spoke to him and said, "Son, thou must now kill a thousand men, and thereby perform thy service to thy studies". Then answered the lad, "I am born of a clan that does no harm unto others; I cannot do it." If thou perform not this service to thy studies, they bring thee no fruit my son". So he took the fivefold weapons and bowed down before his teacher, and went and took his place at the entrance to the forest, and in the midst of the forest, and at the way out of the forest, and there he killed men.') (1.)

What strikes us at once in this style is its simplicity caused by the paucity of ornamental elements which is also the principal aspect in the Pali narrative style. In many stories in Amavatura, the inspiration of Pali style is clearly seen. Considering this characteristic some critics come to the conclusion that Gurulugomi is only a skilful translator but not a creative writer of great talent. There are some other critics

(1.) Translation from An Anthology of Sinhalese Literature upto 1815. ed. by Reynolds, Christopher. UNESCO, 1970 p.59

who strongly object to this view on the grounds that nobody can prove that Amavatura is a direct translation of any single Pali work. (2.) In creating his stories Gurulugomi has followed not only Pitakas but also Atthakathas. Thus he re-created stories to suit his purpose illustrating the Buddha's power of taming various kinds of obstinate beings.

As is seen in the above passage Gurulugomi is not fond of using figures of language except on some occasions either when a simile or metaphor is essential or found in the original story. In his narrative, we find the occasional use of connecting and ending parts such as 'he thought' and 'he said' showing Gurulugomi's awareness of relating a story for an audience, which is also a universal phenomenon of story telling. If a narrator uses these tags too frequently it may damage the free flowing of the story and affect the reader's interest. Gurulugomi has not only been conscious of this fact but also has been careful to avoid all kinds of unnecessary rhetoric and descriptive phrases.

The stories that Gurulugomi has selected are illustrative of the Buddha's wisdom and physical strength as well as superhuman powers. The writer, however, does not try to arouse sensational feelings by eulogistic descriptions on superhuman

(1.) Suravira, A.V. Simhala Sahitya Sampradaya. Colombo 1966. p.106.

powers, but exposes the incidents as naturally as possible leaving the reader at his own discretion to understand the virtues of the Buddha. Thus Gurulugomi has developed a style which appeals to the intellect of the reader and not to his emotions. For further examination of Gurulugomi's style it will be useful to quote another passage:

" ekalhi ditṭhamāṅgalika ghaṇṭāyehi haṇḍa asā javanikā aturin balannī, ohu durin ennahu dāka, kavareyi pilivisā, sāṇḍalekāyi yanu asā āpi kinam akusalayak kalamha hō, ma nasnā kalak vannē veyi, pirisidu vannāṭa yanuyem saḍalaku diṭṭimuyi siriru vevulva, garaha kelapiya, dasnāṭa vaha diya geneva, saḍalaku duṭṭāsa nam kī muva deviya mānavayi rathaya navat-vāgena hāma geṭa dī yavā gos pahayaṭa nāṅgāha."(1.)

(' Then Ditthamangalika heard the sound of the bell, and peeping forth from the curtains, she beheld him coming afar off and inquired who he might be. They said, 'it is an outcaste,'. Then she said: 'What misdeed have I done? Of what evil is this reward? It is indeed the time of my destruction that went to purify myself and have met an outcaste'; and she shuddered and did spit in horror and said to her hand maidens: 'Bring water straightaway; it is meet to wash the eye that has seen the outcaste, and the mouth that has spoken his name. So she washed and she turned back the chariot and sent away all that was loaded therein into the house, and returned to her upper chamber.') (2.)

(1.) Amavatura. p.14

(2.) An Anthology of Sinhalese Literature. pp. 33/34.

Here again we see a natural, terse and fast moving style. The passage includes a dramatic situation from the character of Ditthamangalika, the proud princess who beheld an outcaste for the first time in her life and after washing the eye that saw him and the mouth that uttered his name returns home, giving up her journey to water-sports. The reader knows that her behaviour in contempt of the outcaste is only as a result of the social system she belonged to. As the story develops the Sandola (the outcaste) goes on fasting demanding Ditthamangalika to be given him in marriage. Gurulugomi develops the story to a climax of ruthless irony when the neighbours fulfil his desire out of sheer fear of becoming all of them outcastes if the Sandola died in the neighbourhood, as such was the tradition.

Due to its appropriateness for depicting character realistically as well as its clarity, a number of later writers have admired and sought inspiration from Gurulugomi's style. Some patterns seen in such beautiful phrases as, 'ohu durin ennahu daka', 'api kinam akusalayak kalamha ho', 'pirisidu vannata yanuyem sadalaku ditimuyi', have become highly esteemed idioms in Sinhalese ever since. To sum up our discussion on Gurulugomi's style we can quote Wickramasingha once again: 'the language that Gurulugomi created on this model stands unrivalled by even the modern language of today in its vigour and simplicity and straightforwardness.' (1.)

(1.) Wickramasingha. Sinhalese literature. p.68.

In contrast with the simple style in Amavatura we can examine the ornate style in Butsarana. Vidyacakravarti, the author of this work, has been very similar to Gurulugomi in selecting the stories but his treatment of them is different to a large extent. Vidyacakravarti, unlike Gurulugomi, has expressed his great affection and belief in the Buddha following Indian Bhakti writers (the literature of faith). The circumstances which necessitated devotional literature during the Polonnaruva period have been discussed by many writers on the history of Sinhalese literature. According to Buddhist philosophy extreme faith in Buddha is not necessary to achieve Nirvana. The significance of the Sinhalese Bhakti writers for our study is their efforts to develop the language by creating a variety of styles and expanding the vocabulary with Sanskrit words. Borrowing words mainly from Sanskrit and occasionally from other Indian languages like Tamil, they probably coined many new words. Let us now consider a passage from Butsarana:

" evēlehi ālavaka yakṣayāgē dvāra rakavala siṭi gadrabha
yakṣa avut sarvajñayan vahansē vāṇḍa 'svāmīni
novēlehi meyaṭa vāḍavadāle kumakaṭa dōhōyi vicāleya.
ē asā svāmi daruvānan 'gadrabhaya, esēya, novēlehi
tāge yakṣa vimānayaṭa āmha, idin taṭa nobārivīmnam
ada mē ekarāya tāge mē vimānayehi dāvas galavamha,
tō eyaṭa anudānaya vadālasēka.

'e asā gadrabha nam yakṣa, svāmīni māsatu tanaka nuṃba
vahanse vasat' hot maṭa bāri noveyi, itā dādi vū
ālavaka yakṣayāge vimānaya, svāmīni, ē ālavaka yakṣayā

itā krūraya, nuṃba vahansē vāṇiyavungē bas no asayi,
 mav piyan noda vāṇḍi virīya, mā dannā tansiṭa mē vi-
 mānaya ēkantayen pinakaṭa sarahuvā nuduṭu virimi, mē
 vimānayehi āsanna tāna ū kolin vāgira giya lē vaturu
 genatibena niyāva balā vadālananava. ē yakṣaya kā minī
 balathot maharaṭak ihilkoṭa liya hāki minissuya, itā
 caṇḍaya, nuṃbavahansē vāṇnavunge guna dannā ekek noveyi.
 ē dān temē bāharaya. ohugē aṃbuvo gehiya, nuṃbavahansē
 brahmacāri bava nodanni, itāma caṇḍaya, mē vimānayehi
 vasana bava nokāmattemi svāmīni kiva".(1.)

('At that occasion the gate-guardian demon of Alavaka,
 called Gadrabha yaksa, having approached the compas-
 sionate one and having worshipped him said, 'Sire,
 why have you come at this unwonted hour?' Having
 listened to him, the master said, 'Yes, Gadrabha,
 I have come to your abode at this unwonted hour; if
 you don't mind I would be pleased to spend one whole
 night in this abode. Will you permit me?' Having lis-
 tened to him, the 'yaksa' called Gadrabha said, 'Sir,
 if you should reside in an abode which belongs to me,
 I would certainly not mind it. But this abode does
 not belong to me. This is the possession of the mighty
 Alavaka. Sir, this yaksa named Alavaka is cruel. He
 will not listen to a person like you. He has never
 worshipped his parents and as far as I can recollect
 this place has certainly never been receptive to
 virtues. Behold in this abode, the blood that has
 flooded from the two corners of his mouth and spilt
 on the floor. If you consider the number of human
 beings he has devoured, it would be like destroying

(1.) Butsarana. ed. by Lankananda, Labugama. Colombo. 1960
 p.137.

the progeny of a vast country. He is certainly treacherous. And knows not the virtues of a great master like you. He is not in at present but his consorts are. He is unaware of your having renounced worldly pleasures (Brahmacari). He is extremely violent. I would not like you staying in this abode.')

In this quotation there are a few characteristic aspects of the style of Vidyacakravarti. Vidyacakravarti is very fond of using Sanskrit words although he retains some features in the older Sinhalese styles. His sentences are generally verbose in contrast with the laconic style of Gurulugomi. To narrate stories for the common reader for arousing devotional sentiments this elegant style of Vidyacakravarti seems more suitable. The abundance of difficult Sanskrit words was not an obstruction because in ancient Ceylon the literature was listened to by the common people and not read by them individually. The people who read for listeners at the temple or at some other social occasion were mostly Buddhist monks who were able to explain the difficult words. The old Sinhalese writer thus had to think of the requirements of a collective readership. In between the narrative they had to insert subtle matters of religion, as is well seen in the stories in Butsarana, so that the listeners could pause from time to time from the actual story for a discussion on the doctrine under the guidance of the learned reader.

As the main purpose of writing was invoking feelings of devotion, Vidyacakravarti's style has consequently become sensational. Unlike Gurulugomi he uses hundreds of epithets and words and phrases of respect creating an elegant and elaborate style unprecedented in Sinhalese. Obviously this style became more popular among the subsequent writers than that of Gurulugomi, because it was ideal for the preacher. The predominance of hybrid style and long, exaggerated des-

criptions of superhuman powers of the Buddha and miracles has not completely wiped out the poetic intuition of the writer. Some of his descriptions are still the most beautiful prose poems in Sinhalese. The last story in Butsarana, Vessantara Jataka, includes some of the best examples. In this story, the writer's insight into humanity, skill in poetic description and mastery of the language are highly displayed.

As we have mentioned before there have been a number of other prose writers after Gurulugomi and Vidyacakravarti who followed their styles and techniques but on a rather distorted level. The only writer of prose, in the classical period, whose independent style reaches the same standard as that of these two masters is the author of Saddharmaratnavaliya, Dhammasena Thera. His creative power and mastery over the idiom of the language are well depicted in his lively and humorous style. If we compare some other prose works of this age, such as Pujavaliya of Mayurapada Thera, Saddharmalan-karaya of Jayabahu Dharmakirti and Saddharmaratnakaraya of Vimalakirti, we will be able to see that Dhammasena Thera displays more creative talent than any of these subsequent writers. Most of these classical prose writers seem to have considered themselves as performing the duties of the preacher rather than being literary artists.

Saddharmaratnavaliya is one of the most important prose works after Amavatura and Butsarana. All modern writers of

the history of Sinhalese literature have dealt with great enthusiasm with the style of Dhammasena. They have repeatedly pointed out how Dhammasena blended with edifying Buddhist stories using the speech of the villagers while making the best use of the popular proverbs of the day. So he has been praised as the only ancient Sinhalese writer who has depicted awareness of contemporary life in Ceylon. De Mel observes that Ratnavaliya is one of the most significant works in classical Sinhalese literature because of its originality in the treatment of the stories and striking style, full of poetic expressions and humour:

"As early stories of Sinhalese literature were meant more to be listened to than to be simply read, the dominant device for the narratives was a speech based prose which established its ascendancy mainly through Saddharmaratnavaliya.

His words are closer to those of the ordinary peasant than those of the scholar or the elite. The following passage clearly illustrates this quality of his prose!"

"Hāyi putanda nuṁbaṭa batut vuvamanāda? ataramaga asaval gama apagē yālu siṭana kenek āta. ovungē geṭa vādagena batkāgena yava." (Saddharmaratnavaliya, Ghosaka Sitanange katava. . p.213).

('Why my dearest son, do you need any food for the journey? On the way there is such and such a friendly merchant in such and such a village. Enter that house and have meal and go forth....')

"Here words such as 'hāyi', 'putanda', 'batut', 'asaval', 'yālu' and 'vādagena' are quite common, colloquial words and were not used in some of the early Sinhalese

books. But these words when combined with the rest of the already used classical words, create a style of Dhammasena's own which is fresh in flavour and can be characterised as a style designed to convey subtle experience. It is clearly seen that Dhammasena combines a classical style with a speech-based style."(1.)

It will be useful to examine another quotation from Saddharmaratnavaliya, for further discussion of its style:

" ē striyagē samanō tamangē geyima kellaka hā bāndi veseti.
ō tomō ē kella kerehi īrṣyā ātiva ā bānda siṭuvālā kan
nāsā kapāpiyā ek muluva tibena gabaḍāvaka lā dora pi-
yālā taman kala kaṭayutta saṅgavanu niyā vihārayaṭa
gosin bana asamhayi samanān kāṇḍavāgena vihārayaṭa
gosin bana asa asā hunha. ikbitten ē upāsikāvaṅgē.
nākenek geṭa avut doraḥārapiya kellaṭa kala mulā dāka
unā halavuya. oyit vihārayaṭa gosin siṭvanak piriṣ
mādasita tamāṭa kala gahaṭaya budunṭa dānvūha.
buduhūda ē asā bana vadārana sēk " (2.)

('The husband of that woman was in love with a girl in their own house. She was jealous of that girl and tied her up and cut off her nose and ears. Thereafter she shut her up in a secret room and, in order to conceal her deed, asked her husband to go to the monastery with her to listen to the sermon. Thus they went to the monastery and began to hear the sermon. Then a certain relation of that woman visited her house

(1.) De Mel, Sunanda Mahendra. A Literary Study of Saddharmaratnavaliya. (Thesis submitted to the University of London for the Degree of M. Phil. 1970. (p.177-178)

(2.) Saddharmaratnavaliya, Published by Sahitya Pracarakasamagama. Colombo 1952. p. 988.

and opened the door. Seeing the unjust punishment of the girl the relation untied her and set her free. The girl went to the monastery and in front of the four types of devotees informed the Buddha about the injustice done to her. After hearing that the Buddha started to preach thus.....')

This is an example of the general narrative in Saddharmaratnavaliya. Sentences are simple and short. Except the few sporadic Sanskrit words the vocabulary is unmixed Sinhalese. Words such as 'muluva tibena', 'na kenek', 'mula' 'oyit' and 'gahataya' exemplify the author's fondness of using the speech of the day. The style of Dhammasena is not always as elegant as that of Vidyacakravarti nor as classical as that of Gurulugomi but it is lively and crisp with its unique blend of written Sinhalese, the vocabulary of the preacher and the ordinary speech.

When we think of the features in the style in Saddharmaratnavaliya which we have discussed above briefly we can take this work as the first turning point in the history of Sinhalese literature towards a popular medium, fusing experiences of contemporary life to religious stories and increasing the power of expression of the language. The popular story-teller's style in 'Pansiya Panas Jataka Pota' includes some of the characteristics of Saddharmaratnavaliya in a less effective and decayed fashion. The authorship of this collection of Buddhist birth stories is attributed in common tradition and

in Culavamsa to King Parakramabahu IV of Kurunegala. But modern scholars think that this large and painstaking work must have been accomplished by a board of translators under the patronage of this king. What concerns us here is the style in this work. It is obvious that there are a variety of styles in Pansiya Panas Jatakapota but they are not very different from each other.(1.) The work as a whole exhibits a simple narrative style. On one hand this style can be considered as further popularization of the refined styles of the Polonnaruwa period and on the other it indicates persistent endeavours of the writers to satisfy the taste of the common reader. Following is an example of the narrative style in Jatakapota:

(" ikbitten ē lōbhī velenḍā nāvataṭ ē geṭagos 'palamu mā balā piyā giya taliya geneva, yamtam milayak topaṭa demi' kiyālā ilvūya. ē asā kumārikāvagē māniyo ōhaṭa bāna doḍā apagē lakṣayak vaṭanā ganaran taliya aḍama-
daṭak nupusnā kalēya. taṭa svāmi daruvaku vāni ek dharmiṣṭha velenḍāna kenek apaṭa dāsak miladī ē aragena
giyōvēdāyi kivuya. ē asā etema' lakṣayak vaṭanā ganaran taliyen pirihi giyem vēdāyi' 'maṭa vūye balavat hāni-
yekāyi upannāvū balavat sōka ātiva sihi elavāgannaṭa asamarthava visangnava tamā ata tibū baḍut ē gedarama

-
- (1.)i. Jayatilaka. D.B. 'Sinhala Sahitya Lipi' Colombo 1956
ii. Suravira. 'Sinhala Sahitya Sampradaya '. Chapter V.

vaguruva han peravi pili helā, palam danda mugurak
 men alvāgena bodhisatvayan vahansē pasu passehi luhu-
 baṇḍavāgena yannē, ganteraṭa pāmīna, yannāvu bodhisat-
 tvayanvahansē dāka, 'embala toṭiya, oruva raṇḍavayi'
 anda gasāliya. ē asā bodhisatvayan vahansē toṭiyāṭa
 kiyannāhu oruva āpassehi karakavā nopadavayi vālakūya.
 tamā kī bas nogivisa noraṇḍā padanā oruven yannāvu
 bodhisatvayan bala balā siṭiyāvu ē lobhi veleṇḍāṭa
 balavat sōka upannēya. laya unuva giyeya. vāveka pāli
 valallak. men layapālī giyēya."

Thereupon

('Thereupon the miserly hawker, having visited that house
 once again said as follows, 'Could you hand over that
 plate which I saw earlier? I would like to pay a slight
 amount for it,' Having listened to this the mother of
 the young girl reproached him and said, 'You estimated
 our gold plate which is actually worth a hundred thousand
 gold pieces at just half a grain of madatiya; a certain
 hawker who would be like a master to you bought it from
 us paying a thousand gold pieces.' Then the miserly
 hawker thought to himself 'I am deprived of that gold
 plate which is worth a hundred thousand gold pieces and
 I am smitten with a great disaster.' Thus failing to
 retain consciousness, dropping all the gold coins he
 had on him, and his goods, loosening the clothes he
 was wearing, holding the bar of the scales as a club,
 he chased after the 'bodhisatva' and arrived at the ferry
 bank. There he saw the 'bodhisatva' going away in the
 boat and called to the boatsman, 'Oh, boatsman, stop
 the boat, stop the boat.' The bodhisatva, having heard
 this told the boatsman, 'Do not turn the boat round.'
 Thus he prevented the boatsman from going back. The
 miserly hawker seeing the bodhisatva, regardless and
 not complying, sailing off in the boat stood there
 gazing and grieved immensely. Then his heart burst.

Hot blood spouted out of his mouth. He had a burst heart like the split mud in a dried lake')

As in the language in Saddharmaratnavaliya, a tendency towards using the speech of the day can be seen in this work too. The translators have used the language of the elite in some places, especially in summing up the religious essence or the moral element of the stories. In the above example we find such words as 'lobhi', 'laksaya', 'svami', 'visagnava', etc., which are borrowed or derived from Sanskrit. But still their presence does not make the language unintelligible for the common reader because such words have been mixed in Sinhalese language for a long time and the people were familiar with their meanings. Along with these few Sanskrit words we find the frequent use of ordinary speech, as well as pure Sinhalese words; e.g. 'balāpiya'giya', 'yamtam milayak topaṭa', 'bānadoḍā', 'aragena giyo vēda', 'han perevi pili helā', etc. Here we must not forget the fact that 'Pansiya Panas Jataka Pota' is not an independent work of one author but a translation by several writers. Like Amavatura of Gurulugomi which is a translation from Pali, showing the creative talent of the author yet carrying the influence of the original stories to some extent, Pansiya Panas Jataka Pota too displays its indebtedness to Jatakattakatha, the original work. But it undoubtedly carries with it the current idiom of the language and has continued to fascinate readers ever since.

By the 14th century the Sinhalese language had undergone

a long evolution under the influence of Pali and Sanskrit. From the 12th century the Tamil language has exerted some influence on Sinhalese as a result of the political and religious relations between south India and Ceylon. So the language of the 14th and 15th centuries as depicted in Jatakapota, Saddharmalankaraya etc., possesses an immensely developed vocabulary and structural features.

The prose after the Kurunegala period became less powerful as a literary medium. The country was politically unstable and as a result the nation constantly lost its unity. The kingdom had to be moved from place to place quite often because of invasions from south India and due to conflicts between native leaders. Not only the prose literature of this time but other forms of art such as poetry, painting and sculpture depict the cultural decline caused by the political disorder.

Saddharmālan̄karaya is a major prose work belonging to the Gampola period (14th century) which deserves attention owing to the nature of its stories and extremely popular narrative style. (1.) Most of the prose works we discussed above include stories of Indian origin. It is very rarely that we find a story in them with a local background. But

(1.) Rajakaruna, Ariya Sinhala Navakatāve Ārambhaya. Colombo 1972. p.123

many of the stories in Saddharmalankaraya are set in Ceylon. So the Sinhalese reader finds this work significant as he can read about the life, places and history of his own country. In some stories the characterisation and poetic descriptions are so interesting that we may be able to trace the continuation of the styles of the authors of the Polonnaruva period:

"hiru ras kalaṃbak vāṇi ē śarīrālōkaya dāka uddāla
brāhmanaya, itā āścaryamatva 'kavara ālokaṇḍak dōhōyi
vismapatava balanuyē svarnatīlakāva dāka kāmāyēn umātuva
mahatvū śokāyēn dāhagat śarīra ātīva hunuvū āsvasa
prasvāsāyēn pirunu mukha nāsika kaṇḍulu dhārāven tetvū
nētra ātīva viśaṅga vūha. ikbīti maṇḍa āsillekin
labanalada āsvāsa ātī ē brāhmaṇa tema balavat rōgaṇḍak
pīḍitavū puruṣāyaku men keṇḍirigagā rajagen nikma tamā
vasana geṭa gosin yahaḷu mitrayin kāṇḍavā ovuṇṭa kiya-
nuyē 'embā yahaḷuveni yamkisi mitrakenek āpādārtayak
pāvati kalhi tamāgē yahaḷuvan atnōhāra samīpayāṭa
elaṃba siṭṭidda duk sāpa dekhi samavū siṭ āttāhuda
mitrayinge yahapatgunaya prakāśa keredda āsu kenekun
nindākaṭayutu nugunayak āta, saṅgavā vesedda kalamanā
kaṭayuttehi yodadda nokalamanā deya valakadda mitrayo
namut ohumaya. kāmāyēhi itā lolvū Svarnatīlakā nam
striyak tamāgē nilnuvan nāmāti tadavū saraprahārayēn
māgē siṭ nāmāti śarīraya vīda kaḍakaḍa koṭapuva, āgē
mukha nāmāti ranpiyūmēhi ālumkalāvū māgē netra nāmāti
brūṅgaṇḍa dedena maṇḍakut mā sihinokoṭa Svarnatīlakāvagē
mukha nāmāti padmāyēhi mā alavā veseti. ē nuvan nāmāti
brūṅgaṇḍa dedenā hā samaṅga māgē cittayada lajja namāti
maha gāṃburu agala hā usva siṭṭiyāvu dhairya nāmāti
mahapavura mudun pāna nikmina. viparītava peraliyāvū
siṭ ātī heyin vāṭahennāvu kisikāraṇayakut nāta. siyalu
digantaya andakāra vūvakmen calitava vāṭaheyi. dān

mata pilasaranava sangraha karavayi kiha." (1.)

(The brahmin Uddala saw that beam which was like a beam of sunshine and became very stunned and looked to see where it was coming from. Then he saw Svarnatilaka and went mad with love. His whole body burnt with longing, his mouth and nose filled with hot breath and his eyes filled with tears. He fainted there at once. He became conscious soon afterwards and just like a person suffering from a grave illness went out of the royal palace groaning, and entered his house. There he summoned his friends and colleagues and pleaded with them: ' The true friends are those who do not desert friends in distress, are constant at times of trouble as well as at times of comfort, speak about the virtues of their friends, conceal their blameworthy qualities, support them in good deeds and prevent them from bad. (So my friends) A woman called Svarnatilaka, who is most lascivious in sexual pleasure, has pierced and shattered into pieces the body of my heart, shooting with the sharp arrows of her blue eyes. My eyes like two bees have become so fond of her mouth as of a gold lotus flower and I am enticed by the lotus of her mouth. Together with those two bees of my eyes my heart too has crossed the deep moat of shyness and flown over the high wall of determination. My mind is so confused and I have become absent minded. All directions seem to be shaking and darkened. Help me now in this trouble and console me.)

This passage shows that Jayabahu Dharmakirti, the author,

- (1.) Saddharmāḷankāraya, Tebhatikavarga, ed. Pandit Batuvantudave. Colombo 1918. p. 51.

was capable of treating a story with dramatic incidents and lively character. Here we see the Brahmin Uddala falling in love with Svarnatilaka at first sight. The humour in the original plot has been developed into relentless sarcasm by exaggerating the confusion in Uddala's mind. He was for a long time of such a peculiar nature that he despised even the sight of a woman. But at this moment Svarnatilaka's sexual attraction was so powerful that he lost his consciousness and implored his friends to help him marry Svarnatilaka. As the story develops we find the author's ability in story-telling following the lines of previous prose writers. But the language bears evidence of his imitating the verbose style of Sanskrit prose writers of later times. In the above quotation the sentences are rather long and different from those of Pansiya Panas Jataka Pota and Saddharmaratnavaliya. With time this ornate style became popular among the educated prose writers of the Kotte and Kandy literary periods. In a closer examination of the above passage we can notice another characteristic in the prose style of these later writers. This particular characteristic is the use of Sanskrit poetic expressions, or to be more exact the use of rhetoric, similes and metaphors at every possible place in the composition. This kind of imitation of Sanskrit poetics is not entirely a new aspect in Sinhalese prose. We have seen that a rather early writer like Vidyacakravarti had borrowed quite lavishly from Sanskrit poetry. He could, nevertheless exhibit his originality

in many other aspects. Writers like Dharmakirti have become imitators of Sanskrit prose in its declined stage and used these borrowed similes and metaphors only as superfluous ornaments. Such figures of language as 'the bees of blue eyes, arrows of glance, red lotus of mouth' etc., would not be of any interest to the reader familiar with ancient Sanskrit and Sinhalese poetry.

A work like Saddharmaratnakaraya, written in the late 15th or early 16th century, shows the further degeneration of Sinhalese prose as a result of writers being more and more imitative and confining themselves to religious aims, and the culture being more disintegrated. In the Polonnaruwa and Dambadeniya periods 'a common style' was being formed and becoming established in Sinhalese prose. As T.S. Eliot has said a well matured culture is necessary for the development of such a stable common style:

"A classic can only occur when a civilisation is mature; when a language and a literature are mature; and it must be the work of a mature mind"

But the age in which we find a common style, will be an age when society has achieved a moment of order and stability, of equilibrium and harmony; as the age which manifests the greatest extremes of individual style will be an age of development or decay." (1.)

After the 14th century the Sinhalese civilisation lost

(1.) Eliot, T.S. 'What is a classic?' London. 1945 pp. 10 and 14.

its stability and harmony under circumstances we have discussed before. Most kings and nobility of this time did not have the peace of mind or time to patronise literary activities. The composers of poetry very closely followed Sanskrit poets and their purposes were praising the royalty and propitiating the gods. Poetry also became a medium for displaying a knowledge of languages and poetics and skill in making specific compositions. These characteristics are seen to some extent in the prose works of the Kotte period (16th century). In the following examples from Saddharmaratnakaraya some of these imitative features can be observed:

"ekalhi mārakunjarakēśarīndravū apamahatānan vahan se hiru astayaṭa yannaṭapalamuva māra parājayakoṭa jayagena vāḍa unkalhi; dasa dahasak sakvala divya brahma nāga suparna yakṣa rākṣasa siddha vidyādarādīhu esaṇḍa marupāradibavaṭa satuṭuva 'apa buduhu dinūhayi' apabuduhu dinūhayi' kaṭinkaṭa mahathaṇḍa pavatvā kulmatin kelaganan pilīhisa naṭavamin unun veta atulpā atin at paharamin, payin paya tabatabā hisavaṭā at. - nagā asuruan demin vamatagena akulvā dakunatin atpolasan demin dandatanri ālavanni rudravina ekatin gena uḍananga tatin tat raṅgadidī uren ura paharamin, beradavul morasu ā pasaṅgaturu baḍut gena vayaminudu suvaṇḍa mal suvaṇḍatel kapuru agaru kaluvāl gugul dumlamin ranmālā atingena pun kalasa pilkalaṃba dhaja visiri talvāṭa ādivu pūjabhāṇḍayen atin at sarahamin unun seda paraḍavā diva avut bōmaṇḍa rasva....."(1.)

(1.) Vimalakitti, Saddharamaratnakaraya, ed. Dharmakirti, K.L. Colombo. 1912.p. 134.

('Thereupon the Budda who is like a lion to the elephantlike Mara, having conquered the Mara before dusk, became victorious. Then various divinities, brahmas, nagas (cobra) suparnas (a kind of fairy birds) yaksas (demons) raksasas, (another kind of demons) and siddhas and vidyadharas (ascetics with superhuman powers) from ten thousand universes, regarding the victory of the Buddha became joyful. Then they made a loud noise and spread the news from mouth to mouth, 'Our Lord the Buddha has won, Our Lord the Buddha has won.' Thus having spread this happy news, waving millions of cloth banners over their heads, making applause by touching against one another's palms, stepping in rhythms, waving their hands over their heads, snapping their fingers, clenching their left hands and clapping with their right hands, and taking instruments such as 'dandatantri', 'alavanni', 'rudra' and 'vina' in one hand, holding them up and playing string by string, brushing against one another's shoulders, playing drums such as 'bera', 'davul', and 'morasu' along with the rest of the fivefold musical instruments, making the atmosphere fragrant with sweet smelling flowers, oils, camphor and the smoke of 'kapuru', 'agaru', 'kaluval' and 'gugul' and taking garlands of golden flowers with offerings such as 'punkalas, pilkalamba, daja, visiri and talavata' in their hands they rushed forth and gathered at the Bodhi.....')

This is a style moulded for the purpose of collective reading or as we discussed earlier to be recited in a sing-song way for a large gathering of devotees. This is not a style suitable for creative narration. Long sentences with compounds and conjunctions make the reading tedious. More

attention is paid to the external embellishment than to the free movement of the action of story. This kind of verbose writing is often used by the writers of devotional literature. The predominance of Sanskrit words show the writer's aim of making his prose elegant and sonorous. Attention should be paid to another feature in the language of this quotation, that is the use of incomplete lines of verse or the style which is called 'Vruttagandhi' in Sanskrit. This device of making prose rhythmic gained popularity among Sinhalese writers in the 14th century. In such works as 'Sinhala Bodhivansa', 'Dalaadasirita' etc., believed to have been written in the Dambadeniya period, this style of semi-metrical sentences has been used. None of these works wherein the authors have paid a considerable amount of attention to the embellishment of language can be regarded as a creation of high literary value. In the passage above, phrases such as 'kulmatin kelaganaan pilihisa natavamin, unun veta atul pa atin ata paharamin, payin paya taba taba...' are examples of the 'vruttagandhi' style. The whole of this work is not written in a style of this kind. It includes a variety of styles. Some of the stories are written in similar style to that in the Pansiya Panas Jataka Pota. It can be useful to examine a quotation of this type in order to understand the common style of story-telling which prospered in the Dambadeniya period and which persisted through two centuries (14th and 15th) although the later writers have not made any

effort to develop it.

"mesē varin vara sivuru poravamin harimin obi moba pāna āvidimin siṭṭiyadīma āmbenīyan baḍa daru kenek ātivūha. satvana vārayehi sivuruhāra gihigeyi vāsa davaseka gos sīsā naṅgul viyadaṇḍu gena geṭa avut bitakkana naṅgul viyadaṇḍu tābālā hina redikaḍaheyin aṇḍakaḍa aragannā pinisa vāda hōnā kussigeṭa vanha. evēlavaṭa ohugē āmbenīyōt mōlkoṭa vidāva tamābava nodāna aparaharava vāda-heva nidannīya. esekalhi āsīpiya piyā tibetat muva vivarava dekonin kunukela dhārā vāhennēya. dāri ātiheyin baḍat mahatva tibennēya." (From the story of Citragutta Thera.) (1.)

(While he was becoming a monk and getting out of monk-hood time and again and playing around, his wife became pregnant. During the seventh time at home, he went one day to plough in the field and came back taking the plough and yoke to his house. And he placed the plough and yoke against the outer wall and went into the kitchen to take his dressing cloth in order to change his loin cloth. At that time his wife, who had been tired after pounding rice was sleeping carelessly in a very repulsive manner. As she was sleeping like that, with closed eyes, her mouth was open and exuding bad-smelling saliva. Her stomach looked big as she was pregnant.)

The writers of this time have not tried to maintain this simple and terse style of narrative throughout their works. This story of the monk, Citragutta, involves a realistic picture of the life in Buddha's time. And just like the author

(1.) Vimalakirti, Dhammadinnacariya, Saddharmaratnakaraya, ed. Nanavimala, Kosgoda. Colombo. 1931. p.385.

of Saddharmaratnavaliya, this author too infuses his experience of contemporary life by means of the selection of words from current speech. Instead of creating variety in subject-matter and developing a rich and powerful narrative style these writers, as Vikramasinha says, have paid considerable attention to such devices as Vrthagandhi style:

"The adoption of a new style known as 'vrthagandhi' in works like the Daladasirita, Dambadeni Asna and Kuveni Asna is evidence of the fact that the writers of these books became aware of the monotony that had crept into the language by this time, both in respect of style and subject-matter. But the 'vrthagandhi' style died a natural death before long, as it was itself a euphonic device incapable of expressing anything new".(1.)

After the Saddharmaratnakaraya in the 16th century, there is no evidence of any other prose work of much literary value until the 18th century. When we consider the gradual decline of the political stability and the civilisation of the island during the three centuries from the 16th to the 18th, it does not seem surprising that there has not been a single author who could maintain the expressiveness and richness of poetic quality of the language through a significant prose-work. It is true that both verse and prose remained and continued to be practised despite all the social and political disturbances and economic difficulties of the time. As the history of the

(1.) Wickramasinghe. Sinhalese Literature. p. 108

world has repeatedly shown the rise or the fall of a civilisation happens as a whole. Thus the last symbol of unity and strong patronage for the Sinhalese civilisation was the administration of the King Parakrmabahu VI of Kotte in the 15th century. After his death the culture of the Sinhalese entered on a path of decline which continued until the revivalist movement of Saranankara Sangharaja.

The Revivalist Movement of Saranankara Sangharaja.(1691-1779)

The religious and literary activities started by Valivita Pindapatika Asarana Sarana Saranankara Sangharaja(1.), are considered as one of the causes of the modern cultural renaissance in Ceylon. Beginning the life of a monk with great difficulties he became the most significant religious and literary figure in his time and received the necessary royal patronage from King Kirti Sri Rajasinha (1747-1782). The purification of the order of the Buddhist Sangha (the brotherhood) resulted in the rehabilitation of the old educational system. A number of colleges (Pirivenas) were started wherein hundreds of students from both clergy and laity learned subjects such as Buddhism, Sinhalese, Pali, Sanskrit, Poetics, etc. Soon afterwards a regeneration occurred which can be regarded

(1.) Vacissara, K. 'Saranankara Sangharaja Samaya,'

Colombo. 1960.

as the foundation of the Sinhalese literary development in the 20th century. A number of prose works and various kinds of verse compositions were made by the scholars of the Saranankara school.(1.) Many writers and poets of this school lived in the south of Ceylon and their works are known today as the literature of the Matara Period. As most of the literary works of Kandy and Matara writers are still available we are able to evaluate them in more detail than the literature of previous periods.

The literature of the 18th and 19th centuries can be divided into two categories according to the style and structure: i.e. the sophisticated and the popular. Works such as 'Sarartha Sangraha', one of the many works of Saranankara Sangharaja, 'Asadisa da kava' by King Rajadhirajasinha, 'Kavmini Kondola' by Pattayame Lekam and 'Kavmini Maldama' by Katuvane Muhandiram, are some of the works which can be classified as sophisticated works or works by scholarly writers and poets. There is a large number of folk poems such as 'Yasodharavata', 'Tunsaranaya', 'Muva Jatakaya', 'Pattini Halla', etc., which belong to the popular category. The pedantic writers and poets were well versed in ancient Sinhalese, Pali and Sanskrit literatures and they attempted to keep in line with the classical literature. Most of them suffer from

(1.) Hevavasam, P.B. G. 'Matarayugaye Sahitya Dharayan ha Sahitya Nibandha.' Colombo 1966. pp.19-30.

lack of essential poetic sensibility and contemporary consciousness. Some of these pedantic writers could imitate the older writers and poets skilfully. Their concern has been the exhibition of knowledge rather than producing enjoyable literature. The popular poets were more independent and aware of the reality around them. Although they selected their themes from among the Buddhist stories, unlike the scholarly writers they used a style and figures of speech closer to their daily speech than to that in the older literature. An extensive literary analysis of the popular literature of this age has been carried out by S.M. De Mel. (1.)

A detailed discussion on the poetic works of the 18th and 19th centuries is not relevant for our study. But in order to complete the discussion on the evolution of the narrative prose it is necessary to examine a few examples from the prose works of this time. Among prose works 'Sara-rtha Sangraha' by Saranankara Sangharaja, 'Upasaka Janalan-kara' by Moratota Dhammakhandha and 'Sinhala Milinda Prasna' by Hinatikumbure Sumangala are note-worthy. Here I propose to consider the style in Sarartha Sangraha, a work by the Sangharaja himself. As we mentioned before, the Sangharaja was a great scholar and as Vacissara has said in 'Saranankara Sangharaja Samaya' (2.) he had the mastery of six languages.

-
- (1.) De Mel. S.M. 'A survey of Minor Jataka Poetry in Sinhalese literature with special reference to the Nevill Catalogue of Sinhala manuscripts in the British Museum. (Thesis presented for the Degree of Ph.D. in the University of London 1972.)
- (2.) Vacissara, Kotagama. Saranankara Sangharaja Samaya.

In this particular work which is his major work in Sinhalese, Saranankara displays his command of classical Sinhalese literature and deep knowledge of Buddhist scriptures. The motif of this book is similar to those of Amavatura and Butsarana. It is written to describe how Buddha became suitable for the epithet 'buddha' in the same way as Amavatura is written to justify the appropriateness of the epithet 'Purisadamma Sarathi'. In the Polonnaruwa and subsequent periods the influence of the Hindu mythology on Sinhalese Buddhist people caused the rise of a Buddhist devotional literature, and the corruption in the order of the Sangha in the Kandy period necessitated the writing of a treatise like 'Sarartha Sangh-
raha' on the spiritual and superhuman powers of the Buddha. Saranankara, being the chief Buddhist monk in the country, must have tried to prevent his fellow monks from indulging in occult sciences and various kinds of exorcism. Therefore in this work he has reproduced the life story of the Buddha and some of his great disciples in a rather elaborate way, including a large number of features from the Buddhist doctrine. But the author has not been successful in maintaining a vivid and lucid style throughout the work. In some stories we find some passages of fine prose which are simple and pleasant. But these also seem to be borrowings from earlier writers and not to be original. Following is an example of the general style:

"Visuddha gunaratna pravārākaravū e sarvagna rājottama-
yānan vahanse pūrva janmāntarayehi siyalu satvayaṇṭa

vāḍa kāmativa, hita kāmativa pāsukāmativa, yōgakṣēma kāmativa; kimekda mē siyalu satvayo kesēnam śraddhāven, śrutayen, śīlayen, tyāgayen, pragnāven, dhana dhānyayen kṣetra vastuven, dvipada catuśpada jātingen dāsa karma-kārayingen gnātimitra janayingen vāḍeddōhoyi sitā siyalu satunṭa vāḍakirīmehi sit ātiva upakāra kala sēka. (1.)

('That great omniscient Lord of ours like a mine of pure jewels of virtues, in his past life helped all beings, urged by a desire for their progress, wellbeing, comfort and better peace of mind; and wishing, 'May all these beings progress in faith, wisdom, virtue, generosity, intelligence, wealth, crops, fields, houses, two-legged and four-legged animals, slaves and servants, kith and kin!')

We can compare this long tedious style with the following passage from the same author which exemplifies his indebtedness to the traditional poetry:

"sarvalōka kalpadrumavū ē sarvagnayan vahansēṭa anantāpariyantavū budun palamuvana dāmsak dēsanāvaṭa vāḍa hiṇḍināvu saddharmabhūmiyehi pānanāgi buddhāsanayak viya, maha muhūda ralapela māḍa aṇḍuru vidahā udaya parvatayāṭa pānanāngāvu samapanas yodun lahiru maḍalase ē buddhāsanayāṭa pāna nāṅgi siyalaṅgin budurās kaṇḍa harinṭa paṭangatsēka, divu divū ē budurās baṁbalova gāsī sakvalin sakvala pāna divanṭa paṭangata. ekenehi nisā nāmati kāntava tarupela nāmati gela mutudam pālaṇḍa nilvalā nāmati kesvāṭi tanā dīknāmati hastayen saṇḍarās nāmati divasalu vidā hāṇḍa baṁbalō namati mini oṭunu

(1.) Saranankara. Sararthasangrahaya, ed. Seelaratana Thera, H. Colombo. 1927. p.30

darā tunīō nāmati āṅga solavā kaumada nāmati āsa dalvā
brunga nāda nāmati gāyanā paturavā māge svāmi daruvange
maṅgul bana pūjaviṭṭa mesē sārasi siṭagata. ekenēhi āṭama
alankāravu svarnatōḍu dekaḥ tibuvāsē samapanas yodun
hirumaṇḍala paścima cakravāṭa karnaya sarahā siṭagata.
pūrva cakravāka kanin pānanāṅgi ekun panas yodun saṇḍa
maṇḍala prabhā vihiḍuvamin siṭagata."(1.)

('There was a special seat for the Buddha on that particular spot where innumerable numbers of Buddhas had delivered their maiden sermons. Then the Buddha, ascending that seat like the sun emerging out of the waves of the ocean and climbing up to the mountain of 'sun-rise', started to emit his shining aura. And the beams of that aura began to run all over the universe, through the world of the Brahmas and from universe to universe. At that moment the night, like a woman, prepared herself for the festival of the maiden sermon like this. She adorned her neck with the pearls of stars, made up her hair of dark clouds, dressed up with the soft divine clothes of the moon-light taking them with her hands of the directions, crowned her head with the world of Brahmas which was like a jewelled crown, shaking her body of the three worlds and opening her eyes of water-lilies and singing the songs of bees. At once there appeared two suitable ear-rings for her, one of them being the sun, which is fifty 'yojanas' in diameter, on the eastern mountain (the two mountains were like her two ears.')

(1.) Sararthasangraha. p.267

(2.) Compare: 'Enaluyam Sirivamiyalo nuvan gannā ...

Udāhiru avara saṇḍa - savanathi peda vanvi'

(Kavsilumina. v.327. ed. by M. Siddhartha. Colombo.1926)

"(When the attractive girl of early morning was appearing, the morning sun and the setting moon shone like her two earrings."

Even when the authors were not much concerned about the literary elegance of their work, from a literary viewpoint, as is seen in this work, we can see their admiration of the Sanskrit poetic tradition. The use of Sanskrit words helped them create a hybrid style in order to satisfy the needs of the educated readers, who were few in number but were the patrons of literature, such as the king and the nobility. This particular writer, while describing a night, borrows imagery from older Sinhalese poets who had borrowed them from Sanskrit poets. The description of the night, likening it to a woman adorning herself with ornaments and flowers, does not suit the situation in this story. This description is suitable for a romantic story but not in a situation where a sermon about the transience of life is about to be delivered. When writers of prose as well as the poets of later times were imitating earlier literature, in many instances they were careless about the appropriateness.

In an examination of other prose works produced by the scholars of the Saranankara school, in the 18th century, we can see that most of them have tried to follow the same method as Saranankara in imitating the styles of the prose writers of the Polonnaruwa and Dambadeni periods. Their attempt was to provide Buddhists with as much reading material as possible of the kind that is naturally required at a time of religious and literary revival. Among these works, the following can be mentioned as noteworthy: Sri Saddharmavavadasangrahava of

Siddhattha. Buddharakkhita of Tibbotuvava, Sarvajnagunalan-
karaya (anonymous) and Vimanavastuprakaranaya translated from
Pali by Gammulle Ratanapala.

While the scholarly writers were engaged in producing
books on religion, on the line of earlier prose writers, there
were other writers who produced a number of books on various
other subjects in a style closer to the spoken idiom of the
time. For a long time, as Suravira has pointed out, (1.)
these books were not recognized by Sinhalese critics or scho-
lars. Some of these works, which can be regarded as represent-
ing a minor or a popular tradition in Sinhalese prose can be
named as follows:

- i. Rajavaliya.
- ii. Sinhale Vidupota.
- iii. Tri Simhale Kadayim ha Vitti.
- iv. Sangharaja Sadhu Cariyava.
- v. Alakesvra Yuddhaya.(2.)

To understand the kind of language in which these popular
books are written we can examine the following passage from
the Tri Simhale Kadayim ha Vitti. (The Boundaries and Stories
of Three Simhale.):

"mema mādivū raṭṭē kāranā hāra vena mokāda māda kiyā
āhun bālum kala tānēdi sālakarannē nam, deyyo buduvaṇṭa

(1.) Suravira, A.V. Simhala Sahitya Sampradaya. p.27.

(2.) ibid.

See also Godakumbura. Sinhalese Literature. pp.127/134.

mema Śrī Lankādvīpayehi rajakarana Dēvānampatissa raj-juruvot Mihiñḍu maha svāmin vahansēt Mihintalē Hiranda nam dāgoba karavā nāvata Śrī Mahābōdhin vahansē pihiṭṭu-vana pinisa Araṭā nam rajakumārayā Daṃbadiya rajakarana Dharmāsoka rajjuruvanta kaḍapān āra rajjuruvan vahansē sat dāvasak pēvi siṭa ran sahita hiriyaḷin yodā telen dakunu śrī sakhāvaṭa salakunu kalaheyin ahasaṭa erdhi vemin suvanda kalal pirū ran kaṭāramē vāḍa un kalhi.."(1)

('When the (king) asked how it was about the other parts (of the country) besides this occupied region, he was informed thus: Your Majesty, King Devanapa Tissa of this Sri Lanka and most venerable Mahinda, after the completion of the work of the Dagoba called Hiranda at Mihintale, thought of planting the sacred and auspicious Maha Bodhi and sent prince Arata with gifts (to get it) from King Dharmasoka of India. Then that great king after observing Uposatha for seven days, marked the holy south bough with oil mixed with gold and hiriyaḷ, and then that sacred bough sprang up to the sky and appeared in the golden bowl filled with a kind of sweet smelling soil.')

- (ii) "vena mokada manda kiyā āhun bālum kala tānēdin, ira haṇḍa pavatinā kāleṭa deyyo buḍuvanta. Doḍamdeniya siṭiya eka kanavāndum strīgē ankoṭa mīvāgē haṭanēdi āhun . bālum nāti nisā Solī raṭaṭa gos Solī rajjuruvanta ē ārovittiya sālakala tānēdin Solīrajjuruvā mahabala senaga pirivarāgena āvit yuddhakoṭa dolosdahasak siri Sinhalaḷen allāgena Solī raṭaṭa aragenā giyēya."(2.)

('When (the king) inquired about other incidents, 'Your Majesty, may you become a Buddha during this era,(Kalpa)

(1.) Tri simhale Kadayim saha Vitti. ed. by Marambe, A.J.W. Kandy 1926. p.7.

(2.) ibid. p.7.

(here is another incident): at the fight that broke out because of a certain buffalo with broken horns which belonged to a widow at Dodamdeniya, there was no inquiry by the then king of Ceylon and the case was taken to the Soli king of Soli kingdom, who promptly invaded Ceylon with a mighty army and fought, and he captured twelve thousand Sinhalese and took them to his country as prisoners.')

(iii) "Siriyaṃmāl saha āgē mavu rajjuruvaṇ visin malvatte vāsala navatvā nitara ā veta yana siritak viya. malvattē nitara vāda pala ādiya ātinisā ēvā bālīmaṭa pilimatalavve adikāramaṭa yāma niyamayakva tibīmen Siriyaṃmā saha Pilimatalavvēt rahas mitratvayak ātīvuha. mesē siṭina atara Siriyaṃmā garbhanīva putrayek laddīya." (1.)

('The king made Siriyaṃma and her mother stay in the palace in Malvatta and used to visit her often. As Pilimatalavve had an order to go to Malvatta to attend to various work there, as a result of his frequent visits, a secret affair began between him and Siriyaṃma. And meanwhile Siriyaṃma became pregnant and had a son.')

In these quotations, the general idiom of spoken and written language of the Kandy period, especially the 18th and early 19th centuries, has been used which indicates the disregard of these writers for the elevated and verbose styles practised by the educated writers. Phrases such as 'vena mokada manda kiyā', 'āhun bālum', 'deyyo buduvaṇṭa', 'ira saṇḍa pavatīnā kālēṭa', etc., are directly taken from the speech of the

(1.) ibid.p.70.

time. In the Kādayim books which apparently belong to the 18th century, the style reflects the social disparity of the common people and the royalty. These writers employ such terms as 'deyyo buduvanta' which they actually used in their speech to address the royalty. In the example iii, the style seems to belong to a later period than that of examples i and ii. The fast moving narrative of this Vittti story, viz. Madurāpuren ā Vitttiya, (The story of those who came from Madurapura), is not much different from the style in some Sinhalese fiction of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Thus these Kadayim and Vittti books and other prose works of the 18th and 19th centuries, written by members of the masses, are interesting and useful in a study of the evolution of the language of modern Sinhalese fiction and of the use of spoken language for writing.

CHAPTER II

The Sinhalese Christian Literature.

The Portuguese, the first European nation to rule some regions of Ceylon, and who brought Christianity to the island, soon after their arrival in the 16th century, started missionary activities on a large scale. The Portuguese brought not only a new faith, but also a whole new culture with them for the Sinhalese people. Customs and habits of the Portuguese must have been quite an attraction to the natives of Ceylon at that time whose political system together with their culture had become disintegrated. Portuguese missionaries could, therefore, convert a considerable number of Buddhists and Hindus to Christianity in a short time. When this new religion and new political administration were taking root in the coastal regions of the island, the Sinhalese language began to develop with hundreds of borrowed and derived words from the Portuguese language.(1.)

The missionaries understood from the beginning that in order to propagate their doctrine among the natives they had to learn the vernaculars. So they learned the vernaculars, Sinhalese and Tamil and tried to establish firm and close relations with the Sinhala Buddhists and Tamil Hindus. Some

(1.) Influence of Portuguese on the Sinhaless Language.

Hettiaratchi, D.E. Journal of Royal Asiatic Society
C.B. Vol. IX Part I New series. 1964.

of the missionaries tried to write books of prayers and to compile word-books in Sinhalese for the use of the Church.

As Rev. Dr. Peiris has remarked, even at such an early date as 1545 Jesuit fathers of the college of St. Paul in Goa had composed a Sinhalese book of Christian doctrine for the benefit of certain Sinhalese princes who were living with them as political refugees. Further, Dr. Peiris observes that in 1610 the Jesuit missionary of Malvana translated several books into Sinhalese with the help of a native scholar. Among other Portuguese scholars father Emmanuel Costa and Fr. Pierre Berguin who wrote grammars of Sinhalese in 1620 and 1645 respectively should be noted. About the same time a Franciscan missionary called Antonio Peixoto is said to have composed poems and dramatic works in Sinhalese. (1.) Most of these works by the Portuguese writers are not extant today. The few remaining copies are said to be preserved in some Museums in Portugal, Holland and in the British Museum. Although Catholic and Christian writers of these two centuries may have constantly been producing some kind of works in Sinhalese it seems they were not accepted by the general public to the same extent as those of Buddhist writers. Our opportunities to discover the extent to which they were read and enjoyed

(1.) Peiris, the Right Rev. Dr. Edmund. 'Sinhalese Christian Literature of the xvii th and xviii th Centuries'.

Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch.
xxxv No. 96. 1943.

by the Sinhalese Christian community are few and limited. Although the Sinhalese Christian literature did not become established as a powerful living tradition nor produce unique works of literature to be enjoyed by the common reader, regardless of religion, it has created other features which have been influential on modern Sinhalese literature. The rapid development of the language and the introduction of new themes are two of these important features.

The Dutch who came into power in the Portuguese territory in Ceylon in 1658, paid considerable attention to establishing and promoting their faith, the Reformed Christian Religion, among their Ceylonese subjects. They had better plans for this purpose than the Portuguese. (1.) Under the instruction of the government all the clergymen learnt the vernaculars of the island. They established schools and seminaries on wide scale. These vernacular schools and seminaries contributed to the production of Sinhalese Christian literature. (2.) It would be interesting to consider a few scholars in the Dutch period who produced some Sinhalese translations and books for learning Sinhalese at this time.

scholar ✓
Sinhalese | Fr. Simon Cat was a well known Sinhalese scholar who

-
- (1.) Goonewardhana. K.W. The Foundation of Dutch Power in Ceylon, 1638-1658. Djambatan. Amsterdam. 1958.
 - (2.) Education Establishments of the Dutch in Ceylon. by the Rev, Palm. J.D. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society. Vol. I. No.I. 1847.

has a number of Sinhalese books to his credit including a Sinhalese-Dutch Dictionary and a Sinhalese translation of a part of the Gospel of St. Matthew. Another contemporary of Simon Cat, Johannes Ruel, wrote the first Sinhalese grammar in the Dutch period. The Christian Sinhalese writers have thus been mainly interested in producing grammars, dictionaries and translations of important Christian works. Such books as the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments and a Catechism had been translated into Sinhalese before 1681 and about the year 1710, a series of five Catechisms were in use. (1.)

The most important event of the Dutch period in Ceylon was introduction of modern printing into Ceylon. The first Sinhalese book to be printed appeared in 1737. Soon afterwards many other books were published. One of the most important works of this time is the translation of the four Gospels by Rev. Wilhelmus Conyn in 1737. It may be useful at this juncture to examine a passage from this translation:

"tavada yēsus vahansē ē asā etānin nāvakin vanagahaba
asakaṭa giyasēka, tavada samudāval ē asā nagaravalin
unnānsē karā payin giyōya. tavada yēsus vahansē elibāsa
bohoma samudāvṛk duṭuseka, tavada unnānsēge cittaya
ohunḍa karunāven kālambi ohungē leḍunḍa suvakalasēka.
tavada savas unāma unnānsege sikṣaya unnanse laṅgaṭa

(1.) Dr. Peiris. op. cit. p. 170.

ävit më sthāna vana gahabaya, tavada velāva dān pasu-
 vejjeja, gambadava gos unḍa āhāra velaṇḍāmaṭa gaṇḍa
 samudāval arinavaya kivuva. ehet yēsus vahansē ohunḍa
 yaṇṭa kāriyak nāta uṁbalāma ohunḍa kaṇḍa dīpallāyayi
 ohunṭa kīseka, tavada ohu unnanseṭa pān pasakut
 maṣṭakayo dedenekut misa apaṭa metana nāta kivuva....
 tavada unvahansē ēvā mehe mā laṅgaṭa genevayi kīseka..
 tavada samudāvalaṭa tanavillehi iṇḍinaṭa paniviḍa
 demin tavada ē pānpasat maṣṭakayo dedenat aran uḍumiyava
 ahas talē balā asirivāda kalaseka. tavada biṇḍa pān
 siksayaṇṭa dunsēka. tavada siksayō samudavalāṭa dunnuva!"(1)

- (' When he heard what had happened Jesus withdrew privately
 by boat to a lonely place; but people heard of it, and
 came after him in crowds by land from the towns. When
 he came ashore, he saw a great crowd, his heart went
 out to them, and he cured those of them who were sick.
 When it grew late the disciples came up to him and
 said 'this is a lonely place, and the day has gone;
 send the people off to villages to buy themselves food!
 He answered, 'there is no need for them to go, give
 them something to eat yourselves.' 'All we have here', they
 said, 'is five loaves and two fishes.' 'Let me have them',
 he replied. So he told the people to sit down on the
 grass; then, taking the five loaves and the two fishes,
 he looked upto heaven, said the blessing, broke the
 loaves and gave them to disciples; and the disciples
 gave them to the people.')(2.)

When we compare the Sinhalese translation with the
 extract from the English Bible we can think that the translator

-
- (1.) Het Heylige evangelium onser heeren en Zaligmakers
 JESUS CHRISTI ha de beschryuinge van de mannen Gods
 en H.Evangelisten, Matthew, Marcus Lucas en Johans,
 uyt Het oirfonkelyke Griekes in de Singhaleesche Tale..
 Colombo. 1739. p. 29.
- (2.) The New English Bible , New Testament, Oxford University
 Press. Cambridge University Press. 1961. p.27

has tried to be as faithful as possible to the original. He has successfully overcome the difficulty of finding Sinhalese words for certain ideas in the Bible which were completely new in Sinhalese. The predominance of words taken from the speech of the day is a noteworthy feature, such terms and words as 'vanagahaba', 'unnānse', 'payin', 'elibāsa', 'ohunda', 'savas unāma', 'velāva dān pasuvejjeya', 'yanṭa-kāriyak nāta', etc., show how closely the translator followed the idiom of the everyday speech. Some times the style of Conyn is so bright with local colouring that we can compare it with that of the Saddharmaratnavaliya. Conyn never uses high flown language. He has developed a simple, easily understandable language for the benefit of the ordinary reader, though it is not devoid of defects. Although he was very familiar with the spoken language he had not well mastered the idiom of the literary language. This lack of mastery over the natural rhythm and idiom of the language has been a common defect in the Sinhalese Christian writings of later times too. During the Dutch period the Sinhalese Christian literature became rapidly prolific and literacy was spreading among the people, although a common literary style had not been firmly established. It will be helpful for our study to quote a few remarks on the language of Sinhalese Christian literature by Rev. Dr. Peiris:

"It can be assumed that our translators had a fair knowledge of Greek, Latin and Hebrew. But of Sinhalese

they seem to have known only a great deal of the spoken idiom of the time and not much of the literary language.

.....it may not be out of place to point out certain general defects, common to all the religious works issued by the Dutch printing Press of Colombo:

"1. Clarity and elegance are often sacrificed for slavish adherence to the idiom of the original language; the sentences are generally involved and awkward.

2. There are too many loan words, especially from Portuguese.....'

3. In the inflexions of verbs and nouns, grammar is sometimes violated: e.g. Singular verb with a plural noun, direct case instead of the oblique.

4. 'The orthography is often irregular, especially in the use of dental and cerebral, S, N, L; and such peculiar forms as 'rastriya'(night) 'tipasava'(thirst) 'pavistraya'(clean) 'mashtakaya'(fish) occur frequently. On the other hand these translations are not without their merits. Their vocabulary is extensive and they have presented for us a large stock of words, both learned and unlearned, which would otherwise have been lost. Moreover as they grew out of a literature that cultivated a simple and forthright style, they made for an influence in our literature which is one of leisure and not of action." (1.)

A writer like Fr. Jacome Goncalvez shows a high command of the classical literature. He arrived in Ceylon in 1705, to help the Catholics in Ceylon who were suffering severe suppression under the Dutch government. In a short time he

(1.) Rev. Dr. Peiris, op.cit. p.173

gained a sound knowledge of the Sinhalese language and became the most prolific Christian writer in the 18th century. He is said to have written 22 Sinhalese books. Among these works 'Devaveda Puranaya' is supposed to be his masterpiece. The style in this work has been compared to that in Pujavaliya by the critics. The following passage from 'Dukprapti Prasanga', another prose work by Fr. Goncalvez, characterises the preciseness and vividness in his style:

"ē nisā judayō mā allā vada karati. yadamvalin bāṇḍagena yati. kasavalin talā āṅgē mānsa lē siduru karati. nūsulana baravū kurusē karē tabā kapāla kandaṭa genvā ehi siyalu sabhā idiriyē mā nirvastra koṭa ema kurusehi āna gasā marati. ē nisā māgē māniyani ovun ataṭa prānaya dennata yannāya. iṭa kanassalu novī maṭa avasara denavā soṇḍeyi kiyā vadāleya. mē vacana pirisidu dēvamāniyō āsū saṇḍehi īmunak lapāttēgasā vādunāse sōka gini kandak kusehi vādī āvilī, nētra deka kaṇḍulu ulpat deka vi susumlā ōgā andā kiyanne....." (1.)

('Then the Jews will take me and torture me; bind me with chains and whip me to bleed. They will make me carry the unbearable cross up to the mount of Golgotha and stripping me naked in front of all men and women, will crucify me there. Then, mother, I am now going to give them my life. Do not worry about it, and allow me to do so. When the holy mother of the Lord heard these words, there sprang up a great fire of sorrow as if she has been shot with an arrow in her bosom, and her eyes were

(1.) Goncalvez, Jacome. 'Dukprapti Prasanga' Colombo. 1742. pp. 2-3.

like unto two fountains of tears; and sighing with exceeding sorrow, thus she began to speak."

As is seen in this passage the style is emotive, lively and vivid. Goncalvez has been successful in retaining the sensational, mood of the original work in the translation. Despite the fact that the speech of the time dominates this style, the translator's command of classics such as Amavatura and Butsarana is seen in his skilful construction of sentences and infusion of poetry into his prose.

In the 18th and the 19th centuries the translation of the Bible into Sinhalese was done again and again as the previous translations were never satisfactory. The later writers who undertook this task have, however, followed the styles of their predecessors. As we observed before, their purpose to develop a powerful and common Sinhalese style could not easily be achieved due to the long history of the Sinhalese language being closely related to the Buddhist philosophy. The Europeans brought not only a new religion to Ceylon but also an entirely new civilisation. Therefore using the Sinhalese language to express the ideas of that new religion and new culture would naturally be difficult. Some of the most significant Christian terms such as 'god', 'soul' and 'heaven' were translated into Sinhalese as 'deviyanvahanse', 'atmaya' and 'svargaya', which would not make the same impression to the Sinhalese reader as the original would do to the European reader, because these Sinhalese words have been used to convey completely different meanings through the centuries. God

is not omnipotent or omnipresent to the Sinhalese person and heaven is not the goal of his life. But we must not forget the fact that language develops with new ideas, for which new terms and words have to be coined or found, and these new terms and words become the idiom with time. When we consider the evolution of Sinhalese prose in the last two centuries we may see that the Christian writers have rendered a great service to its development.

After the British came into power in 1815 in Ceylon, a new era in literary activities started due to the political unification of the country and the expansion of education. In 1817, a Sinhalese translation of the Bible by William Tolfrey was published. But it was not a complete translation and after his sudden death the continuation of his work was entrusted to a board of translators. When compared to the earlier translations Tolfrey's work seems successful. Tolfrey had been well versed in ancient Sinhalese literature and traditional grammar. But there were some other Christian Sinhalese scholars dissatisfied with these translations mainly because their language was not perfect and idiomatic. The campaign against the Sinhalese translations of the Bible was led by S. Lambrick of the Kotte mission. He was not satisfied with only making criticisms but went as far as to produce a Sinhalese Bible himself. This controversial work wherein he displayed his criterion of the ideal style, is known as the Kotte translation and appeared in 1833.

Some of the criticisms made by Lambrick on the Government publication of the Sinhalese Bible are worth considering at this juncture. Lambrick's observations are found in a letter submitted by him to the government and in the preface to his translation of 'Gospel according to St. Matthew'. In this letter he criticises the language in the Sinhalese Bible published by the Comombo Auxiliary Bible Society, displaying his knowledge of the language of the Classics as well as of the contemporary common speaker. He emphasises simplicity in the language:

"That the language of the new testament is far too high to be understood by men of ordinary literary attainments, it presents itself even the proof, by having annexed to it a Glossary. Every page of it abounds with words derived from Sanskrit and Pali roots, never heard in conversation, and rare occurrence in common books; and the inflections both of the nouns and verbs are, for the most part, different from those of ordinary use both in speaking and in written communications."(1.)

This criticism would seem plausible if we read even a few pages of any of the earlier versions of the Sinhalese Bible published in the 18th and 19th centuries. The particular authorised translation criticised by Lambrick is said to have been carried out with the help of some highly qualified Sinhalese scholars. Still they have not been able to

(1.) Lambrick, the Rev. Samuel. A letter addressed to the committee of the Colombo auxiliary Bible Society, requesting a new translation of the scriptures into Sinhalese on a model entirely different from that of the version printed under their auspices. Cotta. 1823. p.1

develop a style preserving the idiom of the common speech and blending it with the clarity and expressiveness of the classical language. As Lambrick further remarks: 'The words in common use are rejected, not because of their being impure in any sense of the word, for the most learned native employs them habitually.'(1.) Although Lambrick proved his arguments with sufficient facts and examples and attacked the attempt at writing in the language of the old times, the Board of Translators did not agree with him. Instead the translators replied to him defending their method of using the language. A quotation from their letter would be of interest for our study:

"It must be acknowledged, that at the earlier period of their labours the translators entertained some doubts whether the style of language adopted by Mr. Tolfrey was not a little too elevated, as from its purity and grammatical accuracy it differed from the patois of the maritime provinces, but by the time they had completed the New Testament and prepared the Glossary, their doubts were completely removed, and having become masters of the subject, they volunteered to commence the Old Testament, adopting the same style and diction as being far preferable to that with which they were before acquainted and experience has convinced them that it is by far the better adapted for affording a correct rendering of the Sacred scriptures."(2)

(1) *ibid.* p.7

(2) A letter in defence of the existing Sinhalese version, also an examination of the first six chapters of the Gospel of St. Matthew, presented by the Rev. Mr. Lambrick as a specimen of the style of Sinhalese recommended for adoption in a new version. 'By The Board of Translators. Colombo. 1823. p.18.

The controversies between the writers of Sinhalese Christian literature are significant as they show us the state of the literary language of the 19th century, as well as the concern of the writers about the intelligibility of their writings to the general public. More than any Buddhist writers after the 16th century, these Christian writers had to be concerned about the language because their purpose was to convince the Sinhalese Buddhist community of the truth of Christianity. Therefore writers like Lambrick emphasised writing in pleasant, simple and vivid language rather than depending on the out of date language of the Buddhist classics. Some of the ideas of those critics are progressive and modern and they must have exerted considerable influence on developing the language of modern Sinhalese fiction, because it was a style similar to the language of these Bible translations that some of the Buddhist writers of the 19th century and the editors of periodicals employed for some time.

It would be useful to consider a few extracts from Sinhalese Bibles translated at this time. The same passage from the Bible which is quoted on page is selected here in order to examine comparatively the evolution of the Sinhalese style employed by the subsequent translators:

"Yēsus vahansē ē asā eyin nikma nāvakin aranyastānaya-
kaṭa udakalāva gīyasēka. mahajanayō ē asā nuvaravalin
nikma payin unvahansē pasu passehi giyāhuya. yēsus
vahansē godabāsa bohōjanayan dāka ovun kērēhi anukampā
koṭa ovungē rogāturayanṭa suvakalasēka. savasvū kalhi
unvahansēgē śiṣyayo taman vahansē karā avut mē vanan-

tarastānayaka. velāvada ikmagiyēya. janayō gamvalaṭa
 gos tamaṇṭa bhōjana miladī gannā pinisa ovun hāriya-
 mānavāyi kīvāhuya. ehet yēsusvahansē ovunṭa yaṇṭa kam
 nāta. ovunṭa anubhava karanta devyayi vadālasēka. eviṭa
 śiṣyayō pūpa pasakut matsyayan dedenekut hāra ankisivak
 mehi apaṭa nātāyi kīvahuya. eviṭa unvahansē mahajana-
 yinṭa trina matuyehi hindinṭa anakota pūpa pasada matsya-
 yan dedenada rāgena svargaya desabalā āsirvāda koṭa
 pūpa kaḍā śiṣyanta dunsēka. śiṣyayō mahajanayinṭa
 dunnāhuya. ē siyallō anubhava koṭa truptiyata pāminiyā-
 huya."(1.) (See page 63 for the translation.)

It is the language of this version that Rev. Lambrick criticised as too elevated and highflown and unidiomatic. It is true that we do not find any of these defects in this particular passage. But when compared with the translation of Conyn this seems more sophisticated and closer to the style in Buddhist classics. Although Lambrick thinks that words such as 'pupa', 'anubhava karanava', 'asirvada', etc., are pedantic, we have to admit that the ordinary Sinhalese reader would not find them difficult to understand. But he is not unreasonable if he criticises for not having chosen such words as 'kāvum', 'kanavā' and 'asirivāda' which convey the same meaning and which were in use in conversation. Although the critic is not supposed to recommend to the writer the type of words he should select, in this particular case we can appreciate Lambrick's preference for using a living language

(1.) The Sinhalese translation of the New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Colombo Auxilliary Bible Society, 1817. p. 44.

in literature instead of a language no longer in use either in conversation or in general communication.

Now we can examine and compare the corresponding passage from Lambrick's own translation:

"Yesus ē asā eyin piṭatva kālā iḍamakata rahas lesa nāvakin giyā. samūhayā ē asā nuvaravalin piṭatva ohu passe payinma giyāya. yesus goḍa bāsa samūhaya dāka anukampākoṭa ovungen leḍunṭa suvakalāya. savas vū kala gōlayo ohu laṅgaṭa āvit mēka kālā idameka, dānaṭa kal pasuva giyāya, samūhayā gamvalaṭa gos tamunṭa kāmā miladī gannā pinisa āriya mānavayi kīvaya. eviṭa gōlayo roṭi pahakut matsyayan dedenekut misa vena mokavat mehi apaṭa nātayi kīvāya. ohuda ēvā mālaṅgaṭa genevyayi kīvāya. eviṭa ohu samūhayāṭa tanakola piṭa inṭa anadī roṭi pahat masun dedenat aragena svargaya desa balā āsirvāda koṭa gōlayanṭa dunnāya. ē siyallōma tama tamanṭa sāhena pamana kāvāya." (1.) (Refer to the English translation on page 63.)

The translators of this version, obviously Rev. Lambrick himself, in comparison with the previous quotation, have followed the idiom of the everyday speech. Their attempt at developing a suitable style for the Christian literature in Sinhalese was based on the current conversational language, not on the classical prose. Here, in this passage we find such drastic changes as not using the respectful word 'vahanse' after the name 'yesus' as did all previous translators. In a

(1.) The Holy Bible translated into Sinhalese by missionaries from the Church Missionary Society. Cotta. 1832. p.19

way we may note that this particular change is not idiomatic in Sinhalese. Because unlike many European languages, in Sinhalese terms such as 'vahanse' and 'utuma' are used at the end of the names of honourable persons, except in some early works like Amavatura. Quite apart from this the other changes such as 'kala idama', 'ledunta', 'golayo', 'kama', 'passe', 'payin', 'roti', 'mokavat' etc., show how closely the translators of the Kotte version have followed the conversational language and tried to avoid the language of the elite. (1.) The structure of the sentences and the inflections of verbs and nouns too are based on speech in many instances and not on traditional grammar. The verbal form which ends in 'aya' ('yanavaya' kivaya, etc.) is a popular verbal form in Kandy period which is still used by some Sinhalese writers. This kind of simplification of the language is of remarkable importance when we study the evolution of the use of language in modern Sinhalese fiction. (2.)

Christian Literary Activities: the late 19th and early 20th century.

Christian literary activities were continued throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. As far as the translation of the Bible is concerned these activities were continued until the

-
- (1.) Lambrisk, Samuel, 'Vyavahara vacana valin pitapat karanda yedunavu suddhavu matev visin livvavu yahapat aranaivalya. Church Mission Press, Cotta. n.d.
- (2.) See also Rajakaruna, Ariya. Simhala Navakatave Arambhaya pp.56-57

20th century. The Christian writers of the 19th century not only engaged in translating the Bible into Sinhalese but also attempted to translate some other literary works of religious importance and also to create original works. The many attempts to translate the Bible into Sinhalese indicate that the translators were not satisfied with their Sinhalese style and revised it repeatedly to develop a perfect Sinhalese style. The Colombo Religious Tract Society sponsored the publication of these early translations. The Kotte Mission which was radical in its attitude towards the development of a suitable Sinhalese style had criticised the language of the Sinhalese Bible published by the Tract Society and produced a translation of their own which was based on the idiom of the spoken Sinhalese, but the Kotte Mission had to agree with their critics and later on they have revised their version. Saratchandra makes the following remarks on these revisions:

"The result of the criticisms was that the Kotte version was revised in 1857, a noteworthy feature of the revision being that 'to' was changed to 'numba'. In a second revision published in 1854, the verbs were given the proper inflexions of the literary language, but in a further revised edition printed in 1862 on behalf of the Baptist missionary society, the verbal forms of the Kotte mission were retained in preference to the literary words. In the version of 1910, however, with which Rev. Stephen Coles, Bishop R.S. Copleston and Rev. C.W. de Silva were associated, the literary verbs were again recalled, to be retained in the version of 1919 and the

Union version of 1938."(1.)

The criticisms of the Kotte Mission are significant as they were based on the fact that the language of the translations should be intelligible to the general reader. This fact was accepted by later Christian writers who tried to capture the idiom of both the spoken and literary Sinhalese. For example, in the revision of their version of the Bible in 1910, 'The British and Foreign Bible Society' (Ceylon Auxiliary) mentioned in the title page that "this version has been corrected and revised according to the revised English version and compared with the previous Sinhalese version." In comparison with the previous Sinhalese Bible they have tried to simplify the language maintaining the genuine idiom of both the spoken and literary Sinhalese. The style of this version can be examined in the following quotation:

"ē prastāvehi yēsus vahansē sabat dāvasaka goyem ket mādin
giyasēka. unvahansēgē gōlayo baḍaginiva karal kaḍā kaṇṭa
paṭangattōya. pharīsiyo ē dāka obavahansēgē golayo sabat
dāvasedi nokāṭa yuttak kerētiyi kīvoya. unvahansē ovunṭa
kaṭākoṭa dāvit tamāṭada tamāsamaga siṭiyavunṭada baḍagini-
vū kalhi kalade, enam deviyan vahansege gruhayaṭa atulva,
pūjakayaṇṭa misa tamāṭavat tamāsamaga siṭiyavunṭavat kaṇṭa
yutu nāti pidu roṭi kā hāti nokiyevvāhuda? nohot pūjakayan
sabat dāvasedi dēvamāligāvedi sabat kaḍakoṭa nivāradi vanabava

vyavastāvehi nokiyevvahuda? nuṁbalāṭa kiyam, dēva
 māligāvaṭa vaḍā uttamayek mehi siṭiyi. numut mama
 karunāva misa yāgaya nokāmāttemi yana kīme artaya
 nuṁbalā dānagena siṭiyahunam, nivāradi kārāyan varadaṭa
 patnokarannahuya. maknisāda manuṣya putrayā sabat
 davasata svamiyayi kīseka."(1.)

('Once about that time Jesus took a walk on the Sabbath through the corn fields, and his disciples, feeling hungry, began to pluck some ears of corn and eat them. The pharisees noticed this, and said to him 'Look your disciples are doing something which is forbidden on the Sabbath.' He answered, 'Have you not read what David did when he and his men were hungry? He went to the house of God and ate the consecrated loaves, though neither he nor his men had a right to eat them, but only the priests. Have you not read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple break the Sabbath and it is not held against them? I tell you, there is something that is greater than the temple here. If you had known what that text means, "I require mercy, not sacrifice", you would not have condemned the innocent. For the Son of Man is sovereign over the Sabbath.") (2).

Here we see how the translators have tried to mould all the verbs according to the grammar of the literary language. A simple style is used which is understandable when read to illiterate people. Some words such as 'badaginiva', 'karal' and 'roti' have been taken from ordinary speech and used with a new beauty of expression. The use of words such as 'vyavasta'

(1.) Colombo, British and Foreign Bible Society: The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in Sinhalese. 1910.p.37

(2.) The English Bible, New Testament. Oxford University Press. Cambridge University Press. 1961.p.21.

'gruhaya' and 'yagaya' imply the attempt of the translators to adorn their style with harmony by mixing Sanskrit words with those of the spoken language. It will be useful to compare the passage from the translation of 1817, which I quoted earlier in this chapter, with the corresponding passage in this version for further discussion on the evolution of the style of the Sinhalese Bible:

"Yēsus vahansē ē asā etanin piṭatva oruvakaṭa nāngi vanāntarastānayakaṭa venva giyaseka. samūhayō ē asā nuvaravalin piṭatva unvahansē soyā payin giyōya. unvahansē nikmavit samūhayā dāka ovunṭa anukampa ātiva ovungē rōgīn suvakalasēka. savasvūkalhi gōlayo unvahanse laṅgaṭa āvit 'mē vanāhi vanāntarastānayaka. velāvada ikma giyēya. samūhayan gamvalaṭa gos tamanṭa kāma miladi gannā pinisa ovunṭa yanṭa hāriya mānavāyi' kīvoja. ehet, yēsus vahanse'ovunṭa yanṭa kamak nāta nuṁbalā. ovunṭa kaṇṭa dīpallāyayi'kīseka. ovunda apaṭa mehi tibennē roṭi pasakut, masun dedenekut pamanakyayi kiyōyo. unvahansēda 'ēvā mehi mālaṅgaṭa genellāyayi kīseka. unvahansē samuhayāṭa tanakola piṭa hiṇḍagaṇṭa anakōṭa roṭī pasat masun dedenat rāgena svargaya desa balā āsirvāda koṭa roṭī kaḍā gōlayaṇṭa dunsēka, gōlayo samūhayaṇṭa dunnoya." (1.)

(For the English translation, see page 63.)

A comparison of this passage with that of the version of 1817 will show that the latter is not substantially different as far as the language is concerned. But it reflects a clear influence from the controversial translation of the

(1.) The Sinhalese Bible. 1910. p.49.

Kotte Mission as it has borrowed a number of words from it. Words such as 'oruvakaṭa', 'vanāntarastānayaṭa', 'venva', 'samūhayō', 'gōlayo' and 'kāma' are preferred instead of 'nāvakin', 'aranyastānayaṭa', 'udakalāva', 'mahajanayo', 'śiṣyayo' and 'bhōjana' of the earlier translation, respectively. The translators of this new version have not, nevertheless, been able to produce any literary or poetic development of the style apart from modifying the verbal inflexions and slight simplifications of the vocabulary. Not only the criticisms of Rev. Samuel Lambrick of the Kotte Mission but also those of some Sinhalese critics like James de Alwis must have caused these later revisions of the language of the Sinhalese Bible. (1.)

The Sinhalese Christian writers also pioneered the Sinhalese drama. In the latter part of the 19th century they wrote and produced a number of Sinhalese plays mainly on religious themes, to which they were able to attract Buddhist spectators too. The first Sinhalese 'nadagama', 'Hariscandra Nadagama', is a translation of a Tamil story and is supposed to have been written by a Catholic. A pioneer of the Sinhalese 'nadagam' style was Pilippu Sinno who is said to have been a Catholic as well. (2.) Among these plays, which were

(1.) James de Alwis. Sidat Sangara, Introduction. Colombo. 1851.

(2.) Vikramasinha. K.D.P., Nutana Sinahala Sahityaya. Colombo. 1965. p. 373.

written at the end of the 19th century, were 'Jusepat Katava', 'Susev Katava' and 'Helena Katava', all based on Christian stories. W.C. Perera was another prominent Catholic writer of 'nadagams' whose work 'Orison and Palenthon' gained much popularity.(1.) 'Dinataru Nadagama' is another popular play written by a Catholic. The authors of these early Sinhalese plays performed an important service in the evolution of modern Sinhalese literature as they created necessary incentives and consciousness for creative literature. The language of early Sinhalese drama was a mixture of the speech of high society, the style of the Sinhalese Bible and that of journalism. When we later examine the language in early Sinhalese fiction we will see the great influence the language of early Sinhalese drama has exerted on it.

The Sinhalese Christian writers translated various other stories, too. These stories are mainly biographies of famous Saints and missionaries.(2.) The style of some of these translations are very pleasant and striking. We can consider, for example, the style in 'Kanyaveda saksivu suddhavu Lusiya

(1.) Vikramasinha.K.D.P.Nutana Sinhala Sahityaya.p.377

- (2.) See: i. Notes on the Rev. Fr.D.J.B.Callet.Miss.Apost by W.D.Barnabas.Colombo.1889
 ii. Ruthge Katava.(The story of Ruth.) Translated by C.W. de Silva Colombo.1892
 iii. Esther Bisavage Katava.(The story of Esther.) Tr.by C.W. de Silva Colombo 1892.
 iv. De Zylva Caritaya.(The life of the late Rev. Peter Gerhard de Zylva. Apostle of Moratuva by C.E.de Silva. Wellawatta .1909
 v. (The life of St. Antony of Padua).Tr. by A.Mendis Senanayake. 'Paduvavehi Suddhuvu Anthony Dharma Caritaya. Colombo.1886.

munisvarige jivita katantaraya. (The life story of saint Lucia.)

"kaṭu paṇḍuru māda prabodhavū alamkāra malak sēda, ghana andhakārayehi gilīsiṭi pudgalayinṭa dīptimat ālōkayak menda, bhāgyavanta lusiya munisvarī mē lokayehi prakāśavūbāvin unvahansēgē vismapat dharma gunāngaya dākviya yutuvannēya."

"suddhavū kanyātumange ātmaya tula bhayānaka kunāṭuvak sē mahat śokayak ipaduneya. enam jesu svāmi daruvaṇṭa tamāva kāpakala bāvin-lavkika vivāhayak gāna maṇḍakvat kalpanākarannē kesēda? suddhavū kanyāvarunge samūhayā kāṭuva nitya mokṣa sāpa viṇḍīmaṭa tamā kāṇḍavanu lābū bava gāna kisi sēt anumānakale nāti namut tamāge hruda abhyantarayehi śīghravēlāvakaṭa śoka sahita cancalayak aṭagattēya."

"pūjāva ivaravū kalhi ehi pāmīna siṭiya senaga tama tamange niyam gamvalaṭa hārī giyo. namut suddhavū lusiya munisvarī māniyot samaga natarava suddhavū agida kanyā tumange śrī dhātuval damātibuna dāgāb karaṇḍuva idiriyē dohot mudun dī vāṇḍavāṭi kannalav kiyamin....."(1.)

('It is right to reveal the virtues of Saint Lucia as she achieved fame in this world like a beautiful flower blooming in a thorny bush and a bright light for those who are lost in the dark').

'Like a violent storm, a deep sadness was born in the soul of this Holy virgin. This was because she had devoted herself to Jesus and could not think of a worldly marriage. Although she was not doubtful of being summoned to the eternal heaven along with the other saintly sisters, a

(1.) Chounavel, E. 'Kanyaveda Saksivu Suddhavu Lusiya munisvarige Jivita Katantaraya,' (Life of St. Lucy in Sinhalese.) 1887. pp.1;8;19.

sudden sorrowful hesitation was born in her mind.'

'When the ceremony was over the assembly dispersed and returned to their towns and villages. But Lucia stayed with her mother and began to say prayers kneeling in front of the casket bearing the Holy relics of Saint Agida.)

The poetic aspects of this style and its liveliness show the writer's mastery over the various strata of Sinhalese. The imagery in the first quotation e.g. 'like a flower blooming in thorny bushes' and 'like a bright light for those who are lost in the dark' illustrate his familiarity with both the folk and classical traditions in Sinhalese poetry. All three passages are written in a style comparable with that of early Sinhalese novels. The image of the storm used to present the mental conflict of Lucia is particularly effective, and such conscious use of imagery is very rarely found in early Sinhalese fiction. Unlike most other Christian writers who coined new words which were usually unidiomatic or borrowed from classical works and used in inappropriate contexts this writer has carefully used the words he borrowed in proper contexts. Words and terms such as 'pūjava', 'niyamgam', 'śri dhātu' and 'dohot mudundi' can be given as examples though a term such as 'dhātuval damā tibuna' can be taken as an instance of a defect that was common to every Sinhalese Christian writer. This term is not idiomatic because a native Sinhalese speaker would never say 'dhātuval' (relics) but 'dhātu' or 'Dhatun-vahansēla' and also he would never say 'dhatu dama tibu' but

'dhātu tānpatkara tibū'. These kind of unidiomatic terms are, however, not as abundant in Chounavel's style as in many other Christian writers'.

There have been some other Christian writers who have gone further than the authors we have discussed above in order to incorporate a popular and simpler style. These Christian writers were the missionaries who really went to meet the common people to proselytize them and learnt their speech. We can take a work like 'Nona saha Aya' (The Lady and the Ayah), for example. This is said to be an Indian story illustrating the Ten Commandments. I quote:

" davasak dā āya āgē dorakaḍa bat kakā indadī nōnā mahatmayāda aṇḍina kāmārē vāḍak karamin vāḍivelā unnāya. āyada hālsēru bāgayaka bat saha itā hoṇḍa māluvyanja-nayakut ātiva dilihennāvū pittala tāṭiyakata aragena vatura sembuva saha bulat taṭṭuvat pāttakin tabāgena batkamin unnāya. āya nisansalava batkamin innā atara sāginnen nasinṭa lanvū aṇḍinṭa hariyākāra vastrayak nāttāvū vayōvrudha striyak āgē midulaṭa āvit, āṭa ācāra karalā, deviyān vahansēgē nāmāyen, hiṅgamanak denṭa kiyā illāsiṭiyāya." (1.)

('One day the Ayah was eating some rice at the front door of her apartment and the Lady of the house was sitting in her dressing room doing some work. The Ayah keeping a shining brass bowl of water besides her and also a betle-holder, was eating a plate of

(1.) Sherwood. Mrs (Mary Martha); Nona Saha Aya. Colombo. 1889. p.2.

rice of about half a measure with a delicious curry. While she was enjoying her meal, an elderly beggar woman who was about to die of starvation and wearing only a rag, came to her compound. She saluted the Ayah and begged for something in the name of God.')

This is the style of the Sinhalese folk story.(1.) Some verbal forms such as 'dilihennavu', 'nasinta lanvu', 'nattavu', etc., belong to the literary language. The presentation of dialogues in this work is noteworthy as the author has adopted the same method as in the Sinhalese drama of her time:

"Ayah: 'Nōnā mahatmayānani ēka bohoma hoṇḍayi'kiyā uttaradunnāya.'

Nona: 'Palamukoṭa uyannāgē kulīkārayāya. ohu loku pavulak ātteki. ohugē strī mona andame striyakda kiyā maṭa kiyanta puluvanda?'

Ayah: 'kulī kārayāgē strī matak karanavā āsi oluva solavā 'anē nōnā mahatmayā kulīkārayāgē strī kavādāvat nuduṭu andame kamakaṭa nāti kammāli striyekya. ā davasa tissēma suruṭṭu bomin bulat viṭa kakā vāḍivī innavāya. nōnā mahatmayāgē tāgga labanta ā sudusu kenek novanabava maṭa sahatika-yayi 'kīvaya.'" (2.)

('Ayah: 'Oh! that is a very good thing, my Lady, she replied.

Lady: 'The first one is the servant of the cook. He is a man with a big family. Can you tell me something about his wife?'

(1.) See 'Parker. H. Village folk-tales of Ceylon. London 1910-14. "De Silva, Simon, J. Sinhalese Folk-lore. Colombo. 1925.

(2.) Nona Saha Aya. p.6.

Ayah: (Shaking her head in disapproval, hearing the name of the cook's wife). 'Oh! my Lady, I have never seen such a lazy woman. She spends the whole day sitting in the same place, smoking cigars and chewing betle. I am sure she does not deserve your gift.')

When we discuss the language of some of the early Sinhalese novels in the following chapter, we will be able to see that some of the early Sinhalese novelists have followed this method of using dialogues. This writer has especially maintained the life and flexibility of the 'day-to-day' speech whereas the early novelists failed to do so.

Translations of English novels:

An important feature in literary activities of this period is the translation of some well-known novels, among which 'The Pilgrim's Progress' was one of the earliest. Ranjini Obeyesekera has observed the significance of these translations as follows:

"Experiments in the Sinhalese novel were the most dramatic expression of the impact of English and European literature (the latter only through English translations), on the newly evolving literature of modern Sinhalese. The short vignette, the moral tale, the courtly poem, and the religious fable had all been forms known to the classical literature; but the novel was something entirely new and was soon very popular. The earliest works in the genre were translations; a surprisingly mixed selection of works such as Gulliver's Travels

(1888), The Arabian Nights (1894) and Pilgrim's Progress (1885)." (1.)

We can discuss the style in 'Kristiani karayage vandana-gamana' which is the Sinhalese translation of The Pilgrim's Progress for two reasons: firstly it was the first English literary work to be translated into Sinhalese; secondly it is one of the best Sinhalese translations produced by a Christian writer. The parabolical theme in the Pilgrim's Progress suits Ceylon very well where the people were used to instructive stories with religious themes. The following extracts will give us an idea of the style in the Sinhalese version:

" ē koyi hāṭida kīvot anē magē priya bhāryāvē, magē suratal daruvanē, magē karapiṭa mahat barāk tibena nisā maṭa kisideyak karaṇṭa nupuluvana. ārat ahasin ginnak āvit apē mē nuvara dālā yanabavada ē vināsayēdi maṭa saha magē bharyāva vū nuṃbaṭat magē suratal daruvō vū nuṃbalāṭat, gālavīmaṭa maṅgak sambanūnot apavināsa vana bavada ēkāntayen dānagatimi. ē gālavena maṅga tavama maṭa penunē nātāyi kīvaya, ohugē aṃbudaruvō mē kīma ahalā bohoma puduma vunāya." (2.)

('O my dear wife, said he, and you the children of my bowels, I your dear friend, am in myself undone, by reason of a burden that lieth hard upon me; moreover, I am for certain informed that this our City will be burned with fire from Heaven, in which fearful overthrow,

-
- (1.) Obeyesekere, Ranjini Dayawati, The Impact of English Criticism on Modern Sinhalese Criticism. University of Washington, Ph.D, 1968.p.62
 (2.) Kristiani karayage vandana gamana, Parts 1 and 2. Christian Literary society, Colombo. 1895. p.4

both myself with thee my Wife, and you my sweet babes, shall miserably come to ruin; except . . . (the which, yet I see not) some way of escape can be found, whereby we may be delivered. At this his Relations were sore amazed." (1.)

The translator seems to have been largely influenced by the simple and elegant narrative of the original work. He employs the least number of Sanskrit words. The popular verbal form of Kandy period which ends with the suffix ya, is preferred by this translator, too. In dialogue as well as in the narrative he employs the common speech. Some very common words such as 'vinasa', 'bharyava' and 'karunava' which are originally Sanskrit, but easily understood by every body are found. Consider this extract from a dialogue:

"Muranduvā: 'tavat mōḍayō siṭinnan. mama kiyana hāṭiyat ahalā yaṇṭa varen. oyākāra pissek visin nuṁba kotana gena yannēda kiyā dannē kavda? mōḍa novī yaṇṭa hāriyanna 'kīvāya.

Nāmennā: 'yahaluvā mama mē mitrayā ekka yannaṭat, ohu labana deyak labannaṭat tīnduvaṭama hitā gattemi. hoṇḍayi, Kristiyan, mē yaṇṭa yana iḍamata pāra nuṁba dannavāda?'

Muranduvā: 'mama gedaraṭa hārī yami. mama ohoma mulā-vecca hituvakkāra ekālāgē samāgamāṭa ekatu novemi 'kiyā giyāya." (1.)

(Obstinate: 'What! more fools still? be ruled by me and go back; who knows whither such a brainsick fellow will lead you? Go back, go back, and be wise.'

(1.) Bunyan, John. The Pilgrim's Progress. London 1945 edition. p.12.

(2.) Kristiyani karayage vandana gamana. p.28

"Pliable: 'Well, Neighbor Obstinate, (said Pliable) I begin to come to a point; I intend to go along with this good man, and to cast in my lot with him: But my good Companion, do you know the way to this desired place?

Obstinate: 'And I will go back to my place, said Obstinate. I will be no Companion of such misled fantastical Fellows.')(1.)

Here we find the translator, while being faithful to the original, has tried to keep in with the idiom of the spoken Sinhalese. The allegorical names of the characters in the original work have been so skilfully translated into Sinhalese that they sound as if they were real indigenous people. The names 'nämennā' and 'muranduva' for 'Pliable' and 'Obstinate' may be given as examples. We saw in the foregoing discussion that some other Christian writers have attempted to write in simple Sinhalese. But the style in this work is, by far the best attempt. The early Sinhalese novelists could have learnt a great deal from this translator.

The Expansion of Modern Education and its place in Modern Sinhalese Literature.

During the latter part of the 19th century the expansion of English education and traditional Sinhalese education had played a vital part in all national, religious and literary

(1.) The Pilgrim's Progress. p.16

revivals. We saw in the previous chapter that the Dutch rulers and missionaries had started some schools in Ceylon where the students were given a primary education in some modern subjects such as mathematics and history but mainly in religion. But it was during the British conquest that a stable and systematic education policy was introduced which brought about some major transformations in the island. Because of this transformation the static, agrarian society began to change into a more flexible, modernizing one. As Robert N. Kearney has aptly observed, "Education after the last decades of the nineteenth century spread from Colombo and a few other cities to all but the most remote rural areas and advanced from primary to secondary and eventually to university and professional training. A middle class of public servants, doctors, lawyers, planters and businessmen developed." (1.)

The more the schools were established the more prominence was given to the learning of English. The government encouraged it because they wanted more and more English educated personnel to be employed in the public service. The missionaries supported the spread of English education as they believed

(1.) Kearney, Robert N. Communalism and Language in the Politics of Ceylon. Duke University Press, Durham, North Carolina. 1967. p.19

it was the best way to convert more natives. The people longed for English education because it opened the door for them to enter the government service and heightened their social status at the same time.(1.) Mrs. Obeyesekere gives a fine summary of the history of education in the latter part of the 19th century:

" In 1846, the Legislative Council of Ceylon decided in favour of education in Sinhalese and Tamil. Thirty native schools were established, the majority of which of course were in the western provinces which was the more developed region. Gradually, as the idea of mass education began to catch on, more schools were established in the rural areas. These were not very well equipped, but the medium of instruction, (for what little instruction there was) was in the vernacular."(2)

The urban society was obtaining an English education in well equipped colleges and the rural population had to be satisfied with the so called vernacular education. Of course very few of them could send their children to English colleges in town. This education system was well suited to the purpose of the British rulers and the gap created by it in Ceylonese society still remains. The establishment of some 'Pirivenas' (traditional schools run by Buddhist monks) during the second part of the 19th century can be regarded as a revolt against the discrimination created by the English education. Although

(1.) Obeyesekera, Ranjini D. op. cit. p.25

(2.) ibid. p.25

English was taught in these Pirivenas, the learning of native languages, ancient and modern Indian languages and traditional grammar and prosody was given prominence. At the beginning the scholars who received their education in Pirivenas could not expect to join the public service. Those who wished and did become government servants had been educated both at English colleges and Pirivenas.

The English education and Pirivena education have both played important roles in the modern literary revival. The former provided the student with a knowledge of what was happening in the West and created an interest in science and art forms such as fiction and drama. The latter made the student conscious of his past and made him proud to be versed in traditional arts and native languages.(1.)

Newspapers and Periodicals.

The latter part of the 19th century saw the appearance of a large number of Sinhalese newspapers, journals and periodicals. These media of public communication opened the door for various kinds of writing which caused the advancement of a general prose style that was immediately adopted by the writers of fiction. As Saratchandra says, the newspapers followed the idiom of the common speech:

" It was with the newspapers that the language began to

(1.) See also Ruberu , Ranjit, Education in Colonial Ceylon.

"be extensively employed for the purpose of prose writing, and particularly for prose fiction, after a comparatively long period of disuse. The newspapers followed, largely, the idiom of the common speech, since they had to go outside the literati and reach the uneducated as well."(1.)

At the beginning the newspapers had to employ the language which had fallen into a stagnant state after the 16th century. However, once in use the language began to change with the proliferation of journalists and the ever widening readership. As in any other aspect of Sinhalese literature the first newspapers and journals to appear were on religious issues and purposes. The first ever Sinhalese periodical 'Māsika Tāgga'(1832) (The Monthly Present), was mainly devoted to telling Biblical stories in simple language. Soon afterwards 'Lankā Nidhānaya' (The Treasure of Lanka) was started by the 'Colombo Religious Tract Society'. Neither of these periodicals lasted long.

The main service rendered by the early newspapers and periodicals was cultivating a habit of reading as a pastime and a taste for reading stories for the sake of story interest, but not for the purpose of gaining merits, learning or instruction. It was through the newspapers and periodicals that the famous religious and literary debates of this period were

(1.) Saratchandra, E.R. op.cit. p.52

carried out (which we shall discuss later in this chapter). I shall, however, mention at this juncture the 'Śāstrāḷankara-ya' (1853) and 'Yatalaba' (1854) periodicals of which the former is considered to be the first Sinhalese magazine of literary importance. It was through these two magazines that the well-known literary debate 'Savsatdam Vadaya' was carried out.

Following the example of the Christians the Buddhists, as well, started newspapers and periodicals for the benefit of the Buddhist community in response to the attacks launched by the Christian publications. One of the remarkable early Buddhist periodicals is 'Samyak Darsanaya' (1863) (The True Doctrine) edited by the famous Buddhist monk Mohottivatte Gunananda. Among Christian periodicals; 'Ruvan Maldama' (1866) is noteworthy as it published various stories and introduced the serialising of novels.

By analysing a few passages from the periodicals of this time we can learn the significance of them in the evolution of modern Sinhalese prose:

" Śrīmat śrīghana sugata tatāgata sarvagnayan vahansēgē caranāravinda sarana parāyanavū mehi matu nam saṇḍahan karana apavisin śrilankādvīpa vāsingē ubhaya lōkāṛta sansiddhiya saṇḍahā buddhadharmayada, ādhunikayange dānagānīma saṇḍahā śāstrāgam pilibaṇḍa karunuda, unun visin evana anuṇṭa apahāsayaṅ nāttāvu sudusu liyunda maṇāvu āranciḍa, ovunovungē sankā vinōḍaya pinisa pilivisa evana karunu āḍiyada antargata koṭa 'Satyasa-muccaya' nam prakaranayaṅ masakaṭa varak prakāśa karanu

"lābē. eya satpuruṣayan visin gena grahaṇa dhāraṇa vāṣayen sit'hi tabā ubhaya lōkāṛta sansiddhiya saṇḍahā utsaha kaṭayutuyi." (Satyasamuccaya, 1863, N.S.Fernando)

('I, who am a great devotee of our Lord the Buddha, and whose name will appear below, shall publish a monthly magazine, by name 'Satyamamuccaya, to present Buddhism for the benefit, in this world and the next, of the people of Lanka, and in order to publish educational and religious information for the common man and questions by readers, Also to publish those letters to the editor that would not cause annoyance. May good gentlemen receive it cordially, read it and learn from it and benefit themselves in both this and the next world.')

This shows that, as with most editors of newspapers and periodicals of the early period this one too has preferred to employ a highflown style although he emphasises that he aimed to reach the common readers. Most of the editors of that period were highly versed in classical Sinhalese literature and Sanskrit and Pali. They preferred to employ a style highly Sanskritised as is seen in the above example, but the general style of journalism naturally found its way towards a popular simple style. In the beginning the newspapers and magazines carried mostly articles on subjects such as Eastern medicine, astrology, prosody, grammar etc; which encouraged the scholarly writers to employ a "high-flown" style.

At the beginning of the 20th century, we see the appearance of some periodicals devoted to literature. 'Viveka Kalaya' (1902) and 'Pustakalaya' (1905) which were edited by Bentota Albert Silva, published stories of various kinds,

literary articles and reviews, and reached a wide circle of readers. While serialising Sinhalese novels, Albert Silva published a series of brief accounts of classical literature in 'Pustakalaya'. Another popular literary periodical of this time was 'Sinhala Jatiya' (1903) edited by Piyadasa Sirisena in which short stories and poems were published along with sensational articles on the subject of the betterment of the Sinhalese nation and Buddhism. In this magazine, it should be noted, Piyadasa Sirisena first serialised most of his own novels. W.A. Silva, another popular and major literary figure of the early 20th century, edited the magazine 'Sirisara' in which he too serialised his own novels.

It is interesting to see that some of the writers of that time understood their task as the pioneers of modern Sinhalese literature to develop the flexibility and sensibility of the language. With the proliferation of newspapers and periodicals; the Sinhalese language and literature, which has not been highly regarded by the upper circles of society for a long time, started to attract their attention. As one writer has remarked in the magazine 'Grantha Prakasa':

"The Sinhalese language has been in use only at Buddhist temple-schools, government vernacular schools and by ordinary people like farmers for some time. But now, it has spread among our nobility too, though to a small extent." (1.)

(1.) Vikramasinha, K.D.P. op.cit. p.79

A detailed and complete account of Sinhalese newspapers and periodicals will not be presented here as it has been covered by other writers.(1.) Nevertheless, a brief account would help us to learn of the development of prose in the Sinhalese novel. The first Sinhalese newspaper, Lankaloyaya which appeared in 1860, was soon followed by a number of others published for various purposes. The nature and role of these early newspapers was similar to that of the periodicals.

'Lakmini Pahana', started in 1862, existed until 1924. This newspaper often published introductory accounts of classical literary works and reviews and criticisms of contemporary Sinhalese novels. As a reaction against the 'Lakmini Pahana' the Catholics started 'Lakrivi Kirana' in 1863. 'Gnānārtha Pradīpa' is another major Catholic newspaper which played an important part in religious and literary debates at that time.

The late 19th century and the early 20th century saw the appearance of a number of periodicals, weekly newspapers etc., devoted to humour. The first of these was 'Kavaṭa Katikaya' (1872). Some of these humorous newspapers like 'Kavaṭa Mutta' were so popular that they continued to be published until very recent times. The funny and comic articles and stories published in these papers were mostly based on facts drawn from

-
- (1.) i. Saratchandra, E.R. Sinhalese Novel.
 ii. Vikramasinha, K.D.P., Nutana Sinhala Sahityaya.
 iii. Pragnasekera, Kalukōṇḍayave, Ven. Sinhala Puvatpat Sangara Itihasaya. Vol.1. Colombo 1970.
 iv. Obeyesekera, Ranjini.D. Op.cit.

contemporary society and this necessitated the use of the real speech of the people.

The awareness of some of the journalists of that time of the style of others is a noteworthy feature in the history of Sinhalese newspapers and periodicals. I quote one of those instances:

" Apart from this there is a saying that it was only after the appearance of Lakrivi Kirana that the Sinhalese people learnt to write good Sinhalese. This idea of this editor is wrong because of the fact that we can write good Sinhalese though we hardly ever do read the Kirana. It would be more correct, if he said that writing has developed at this time due to the establishment of schools in many areas, the easy access to printing machines, and the development of reading facilities.....How could it be possible for Lakminipahana to exist for one year before the appearance of the Kirana if we had to learn good writing from this editor? Any one can witness the elegance of the style of Lakminipahana of that year by comparing it with that of any other newspaper of today."(1.)

This kind of criticism was often made and gradually the controversial writers had to simplify their styles. The process of simplification was largely expedited by the reviews and literary debates which were carried out through these newspapers. I quote one example of the style of the reviews of this time:

"meyin 'montikristō' katāva gāna mahat piṭu

(1.) From a quotation in Sinhala Puvat pat Sangara Pragnasekera, p.231. Vol. 2.

gananak apatē āriyāṭa kanagāṭu vemu. mebaṇḍu katāvastu valin mahat prayōjanayak ātāyi nositamu. katāvastu onā karannē nikam kālāya gatakarannangē citta vinodaya pinisayi. ebavin matu mattaṭa gahana kalāpavala mebaṇḍu katāvastu aḍangu nokoṭa ugatamanā śilpaśāstra pilibaṇḍa karunuma antargata karatnam mānavāyi sitamu. lōke bo- hōdena 'ārabiyan nayit' rāmāyanādi katā kiyavīmaṭa kāmāti veti. ē sampapralāpavalin kālāya gatavenavā misa ubhaya lōkayaṭama artayak nāta. manuṣyayakuṭa āttāvu kālāya itāma svalpayaki. ē svalpakālayat nispala katā kiyavīmaṭa, nāḍagam sellam bālīmaṭa gatakalot prayo- janavat dē kiyavīmaṭa hā yahapat kaṭayutu karantaḍa kālāyak koyinda?" (1.)

(.....We cannot approve devoting such a number of pages to the story of Monte Cristo. We cannot imagine how these stories would benefit the reader. Stories are needed only for idlers. So we expect to read more useful and knowledgeable items in the future issues. Most people in the world have a great liking for stories such as Arabian Nights and Ramayana. These useless stories are good for nothing but to waste time. The life span of a human being is very short. Therefore it is a sin to waste time on reading meaningless stories and going to the theatre. We must save our precious time to read meritorious books and perform good deeds.)

This is a translation of a passage from a newspaper re- view(2.) of the first number of a periodical called 'Sihala Sangarava'. The writer clearly expresses his attitude towards

(1.) Pragnasekera, K. op.cit. p.263.

(2.) 'Lakmini Pahana'. 12th October. 1893.

modern stories and fiction which is the traditional Sinhalese Buddhist belief that literature of worldly themes and aims is useless and harmful to society. At the time when this review appeared in Lakmini Pahana a great interest and enthusiasm was growing among Sinhalese people for fiction and theatre. Therefore some traditional writers thought it their duty to protect the Sinhalese culture from these new trends. As it was difficult for them to prevent the Sinhalese Buddhists from reading new stories or going to the theatre the only reaction which was possible for the Buddhist writers or conventionalists was to begin a new tradition suitable for their ideals. The religious and nationalistic plays written by John de Silva and the early Sinhalese novels of Albert Silva and Piyadasa Sirisena are examples of this reaction. They borrowed the form of the novel and drama from the Western literature or from Christian literature in Ceylon and used it for their own purpose of saving Buddhism and the Sinhalese nation from westernization.

The other important feature in the above passage is the simple style. This style reminds one of the speech of a Sinhalese scholar educated in a temple school or of a Buddhist monk. Terms such as 'cittavinodaya pinisayi' and 'mänaväyi sitamu' are examples of this particular style. At the same time we notice the lavish use of colloquial words such as 'apate äriya' (wasted), 'nikam kälaya gatakarannan' (idlers) and 'adangu nokota' (not included) along with familiar

Sanskrit words.

Publication of Classical Sinhalese books:

As a result of the literary revival and expansion of education at this time, scholars began to edit and publish the major works of the classical literature. With the establishment of 'Pirivenas' more and more Sinhalese, Pali and Sanskrit books were needed. At the same time the British Government in Ceylon too paid some attention to these ancient books and some English educated scholars like James de Alwis published Sinhalese books with English introductions and translations.(1.) These new editions made the ancient literature of the Sinhalese easily accessible to a large number of readers. Before that, these books existed in the form of palmleaf manuscripts in libraries at Buddhist temples and they were handled and used with respect by a limited number of Buddhist monks and students. The only way of access to them for the layman was listening to them on 'Poya Days' at the assembly at the temple when they were read to them rhythmically by an able priest or an elder.

After the establishment of 'Pirivenas' and government vernacular schools these ancient books became prescribed texts for examinations. Thus towards the end of the 19th century most of the classical Sinhalese works had been printed. Together with the other features such as newspapers, periodicals

(1.) Alwis, James de. Sidat Sangarava. Colombo. 1852

and drama, these classical works too influenced the Sinhalese prose writers of this period. The reading of these books caused the Sinhalese Buddhist writers to adhere to themes of instruction and moral issues. They were also inspired and enchanted by the styles and vocabulary of the classical writers and tried to imitate them. As a result of this influence from the classical works, writers preferred to employ the style known as 'the literary Sinhalese' or the written Sinhalese.(1.) It was not considered scholarly or respectable to write in 'spoken Sinhalese'. This created such a deep dichotomy that the Sinhalese novelists of the early period were reluctant to use the colloquial language even in dialogues. The language of the Sinhalese novel, nevertheless, had a tendency for simplification and instances of this are found even at its very early stage.(2.) One may argue that this dichotomy of 'literary' and 'spoken' languages in Sinhalese has existed from very early times. What must be emphasised here is that after the publication of classical works in the latter part of the 19th century the Sinhalese writers cultivated an enlivened nostalgia for the classical styles and grammar and began to imitate them thinking it a sign of true learning to be able to write in a highly Sanskritised and grammatical style that may be intelligible only to the elite.

(1.) De Silva, Sugatapala. Sinhalese Language. . 1964
Ceylon Government Press.

(2.) De Silva, Sugatapapa. The Language of Modern Sinhalese Prose Literature. 'Nutana Sahitya Vicara'. 1963
Ceylong Government Cultural Department.

Publication of Folklore:

Another feature in the literary activities in the latter part of the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century, which should be accounted as one of the influences on the evolution of modern prose, is the publication of Sinhalese folklore. Obviously this interest in the folklore was first created by the English scholars in Ceylon. The excellent collection of Sinhalese folklore by H. Parker is the best example.(1.) In 1925, J. Simon de Silva edited another collection of Sinhalese Folklore which was published by the Christian Literary Society in Colombo. This editor was helped and instructed in his work by the British government agent of Galle, and the introduction written by him shows that he considered folkstories as the best source to understand the life and culture of the common people of a country.(2.) As this has been used as a set book at government vernacular schools for a long time, the stories have become highly popular. Most of these folkstories are related to a common, wise or humourous saying. I propose to quote 'The story of a Jaggery Seller' on which is based the proverb 'It is just like the story (or saying) of the Jaggery Seller'. ('hariyata sudu hakuru karayage katava vageyi')

-
- (1.) Parker. H. Village folk-tales of Ceylon. London.1910-14.
 (2.) De Silva. Simon. J. Sinhalese Folklore. Colombo 1925

" ektarā rajakenekuṭa hakuru dena minihek siṭiyēya. ohu ē hakuru nitarama suden genat deyi. dinak rajjuruvo ohuṭa katākoṭa nuṃba mē taram sudaṭa kesē hakuru vatkarannēdāyi āsūha. ohu uttara demin svāmīni ran maṭullen perā, ranbhājanayē vatkoṭa, ranhānden hāṇḍigā ran polkaṭuvala vatkaranaheyin hakuru suduyayi kīya. rajjuruvo eya sābāyayi piligatha. dinak rajateme sellam pinisa gos hārī enaviṭa yaṭa kī hakuru velendāgē geyi midulen pāminīyēya. ohu mē velāvaṭa amuḍayak gasāgena loku kalumāṭi bhājanayak polkaṭu hāṇḍakin hāṇḍigāmin polkaṭuvala hakuru vatkaranu dāka:āyi bola edā tā mā samaga kīvē mehemadāyi āsīya. eviṭa ē minihā, dēvayan vahansa, kīma ehema namut kirīma mehemayayi uttara dunnēya. rajjuruvo katā nokara yaṇṭa giyāha."(1)

('There was a jaggery maker for a certain king. He always provided the king with white jaggery. One day, the king called him and asked; 'How do you make this jaggery white?' 'My Lord,' the man replied, 'the jaggery becomes white as I filter (the treacle) with a gold 'matulla', pour it in a gold bowl, stir it with a gold spoon and make it in gold pans.' The king trusted his words. Another day when the king was returning after a stroll he happened to pass by the house of the jaggery seller. The latter was, at that time, wearing a loin cloth and stirring a big black bowl with a coconut-shell spoon. The king saw it and asked, 'Fellow, this method is not what you said the other day?'. 'My Lord, that is how it is said, but this is how it is done," the man replied. The king went away, without saying anything.")

(1.) Simon de Silva, J. op.cit. p.6.

All the stories are written in a style similar to this. It is the same simple style which is used by villagers when they enjoy themselves telling these stories to each other. But we should notice how the editor has changed the sentence endings slightly with verb forms such as 'kīya', 'āsūha' etc., which are found only in the grammar of the written Sinhalese. Some connecting forms such as 'vatkoṭa' and 'katākoṭa' and also 'uttara demin' too belong to the pattern of the written language because in the spoken language these expressions become 'vakkaralā', 'katākaralā' and 'uttara dunnā' respectively. This modification of the language may be the result of an attempt to attract the attention of the elite and also to teach the writing of good Sinhalese to students.

'Mahadāna Muttage Katāva' is another popular folk story of the Sinhalese. The episodes in this story are satires of pedants.(1.) They are about the mock adventures of 'Mahadana Mutta' or 'the wise of the wise' and his five acolytes. The form of this story is somewhat similar to that of the western picaresque story. The travels of Mahadanamutta remind us of Joseph Andrews in Henry Fielding's novel. But the story of Mahadanamutta is short and entirely full of light humour and therefore it cannot be considered as a picaresque novel such as Joseph Andrews or 'Dead Souls' by Gogol. The interesting

(1.) Mahadana Muttage Katava. ed. Simon Perera. 1897.

aspect of these publications of folk stories to us is possible influence they must have had on early Sinhalese novelists and the adoption of popular styles for writing.

If we compare the following extract from Mahadanamuttage Katava with that from the Sinhalese folklore by Simon de Silva, we will see that the style has not been changed in twenty eight years. (the former appeared in 1897 and the latter in 1925.)

" ādikālaye mahadāna muttāyayi paṇḍitayek siṭṭiyēya.
ohugē vāḍa paniviḍa karana, polbā mūnayi, kōṭukitayyayi,
rabbāḍa ayyayi, puvabbadillayi, idikatu pāncayi yana
namin gōlayō pasdenek siṭṭiyōya. mē sadena tavat gōla
bālayin soyana pinisa nānā disāvala gam niyam gamhi
āvidagena yana atara dinak rātri kukulā aṇḍalanṭa
palamu ovunṭa gaṅgak sambavuneya. mē gaṅga. biyakaru
bāvin avadi velāvaka etaravenṭa yutu nātayi. maha-
dānamuttā kalpanākoṭa gaṅgāva nidida avadidāyi parikṣā
kirīma pinisa kōṭukitayyā ehi yāvīya. ohu rā nisā
maṅgaṭa eliyakaragena ā tamā atē tibuna hulu eliyat
gena gaṅga ayinaṭa gos ātin siṭṭagena hula ṭikak gaṅgē
obābālūviṭa 'suru, suru' gā dum dā enavā dāka biyavi..
....."(1.)

('Once upon a time there was a wise man called Mahadanamutta. He had five obedient pupils who were called Polba Muna(The one with a face like a half-coconut), Kotu kitayya (the one as thin as a stick), Rabbada Ayya (the red one), Puvabbadilla (the one like an arecanut tree) and Idikatu Panca (the little one like a needle). One day they set out wandering through

many villages and towns and found a river early in the morning, before the first cock crow. Mahadanamutta thought that it would not be safe to cross that river if it were not asleep. So he sent Kotukitayya to check whether the river was asleep or awake. Kotukitayya went up to the river, and inserted the flambeau he was carrying in the water to find whether the river was asleep or not. As the flambeau touched the water it started to smoke with a sputtering sound like 'suru, suru' and Kotukitayya became frightened....)

The story develops with more humorous incidents which always end with a foolish decision made by Mahadanamutta to save himself and his pupils from the problems they met with or foolish solutions given by him to the people who sought his help. As we saw in the foregoing analysis of the story of the Jaggery seller the style in this work too is modified so as to be consistent with basic grammar of the literary Sinhalese. The verbs (*siṭiyōya*, *sambavunēya*, *yāviya*) are inflected. But the simplicity and vocabulary of the original folk story is largely preserved. While most scholars were contemplating the revival of classical literature by editing and publishing works from it, it is interesting to see that some others were thus taking interest in folklore.

Pamphlets .

Among various writings of this time we find some pamphlets written on diverse subjects. These pamphlets as in any other language were written both in prose and verse for the purpose of propaganda. Some of the Sinhalese pamphlets were

published by Buddhist and Christian writers in order to attack each others' religion or to reply to the rival groups. The writing of pamphlets is significant here because it is necessarily an approach to the masses which require the use of their language. The style in Sinhalese pamphlets at this time is similar to that of newspapers and debates. When we discuss the language of debates later in this chapter we shall see aspects common to the language of pamphlets, too. Following are some of the pamphlets published in this period:

- i. "Gavtama Budun saha Buddhāgama hevat gavtama budunge jīvitaya pilibaṇḍavū pravruttiyada ohugē dahama saha tunsaranat parikṣā kara bālīma ātuluva tunpiṭakayada gāna karanalada parikṣanayak." (1.)
- ii. Daladā Māligāva. (2.)
- iii. Henapota Nohot Henapolla. (3.)
- iv. Sābāva Sōdisi Kirīma. (Truth seeking) (4.)
- v. Rūpa Ādahīma gāna suddha liyavillen Piṭapat karagat Vagantivalya. (Selections from the Bible on the subject of idolatry.) (5.)
- vi. Gautama Budun kavuda? (Who is Gautama Buddha?)(6.)
- vii. Mityāvāda Khandanaya (A tract attacking Jesus Christ. A reply to the above work.) (7.)

-
- (1.) Published by The Wesleyan Press, Colombo. 1890.
 - (2.) Religious Tract Society, Colombo. 1892
 - (3.) Author's name is given as. A.D.G. Printed at Sasanabhi-vruddhi Press. 1895.(place not given.)
 - (4.) Alahakoon . D.J. Sastradhara Press 1889.
 - (5.) Cotta. 1831.
 - (6.) Colombo. 1889.
 - (7.) Colombo. 1889.

Translation of World Literary works.

In our discussion of the literary activities in the latter part of the 19th century we have seen that the writers at that time had already paid some attention to works of fiction in world literature. The translation of works like 'The Pilgrim's Progress' as we saw was an early task of this kind. During the same time we see that some other major works from English and Sanskrit have been translated or adapted into Sinhalese. The short narratives and parables published in periodicals and the requirements of the vernacular schools can be regarded as the reasons for these translations. The 'Ramayana' and 'The Arabian Nights' are among the earliest of these translations. The styles as well as the romantic elements in these works have exerted considerable influence on the early Sinhalese novels.

Before considering a few passages from the translations of 'The Arabian Nights' it will be helpful to quote a modern Sinhalese critic on the significance of these translations:

" Fiction entered our literature from European and Indian sources in the shape of direct prose translations. These translations both provided models for the earlier novelists who had no first-hand acquaintance with the English novel, and also helped to mould the language into a suitable medium for the writing of original fiction." (1.)

In our discussion on the early Sinhalese fiction-writers we shall be able to see how true Saratchandra's speculations are. Some Sanskrit works such as Pancatantra or Hitopadesa, although they were translated into Sinhalese before The Arabian Nights, have been as attractive as the latter to the early Sinhalese novelist. This may be attributed to the fact that the narratives in the Arabian Nights opened up a completely new kind of romantic world without any obvious religious coating or purposes. On the one hand these stories were similar in structure to the Buddhist stories and on other the fantastic and adventurous elements in them made it easy for the Sinhalese readers to enjoy them.

However popular these translations may have been there were some scholars, strict Buddhists of course, who were against them and criticised them as obscene and vulgar. A number of such criticisms of the translations of Ramayana and the Arabian Nights have been quoted by Ariya Rajakaruna: (1.)

" There are some editors of newspapers who spend money on publishing such useless rubbish as Ramayana and Arabian Nights." (Lakmini Pahana, 31-July-1909) (1.)

Although there have been criticisms like these the popularity of these new stories continued and is widespread. Opposition to the Ramayana and other Sanskrit fiction has

(1.) Rajakaruna, Ariya. Sahitya Ruciya ha Navakata Vicaraya Colombo. 1970. pp.14-15.

(2.) ibid. p.15.

existed for a long time in Sinhalese Buddhist society. The celebrated Sinhalese poet of the 15th century Totagamuva Rahula condemned these stories as meaningless, harmful ones.(1.) The criticisms against the translations of a work like Arabian Nights are, due to its secular, entertaining aspects, quite understandable.

Two Sinhalese versions of this work were published in the same year. Arabi Yamini Vilasaya (1891) and Arabi Nisollasaya (1891). The first of these versions, 'Arabi Yamini Vilasaya' was translated by P.A. Perera. This is not a complete translation. The following remarks from the introduction may throw some light on our subject.

" Although the scholars of ancient times have written a number of books on religious and other subjects, they never wrote books like these which are enjoyable and interesting to the readers."

" Due to the lack of a book written in simple language for the ordinary reader, we have decided to translate this work. Our attempt was to write in simple, idiomatic Sinhalese as best we could."(2.)

Through these remarks we can observe the growing resentment among readers about conventionalists and purists of the language who employed a highly Sanskritised style. When he says his attempt was to write simple and idiomatic Sinhalese,

(1.) Kavyasekara. ed. Pannaloka H. 1935. Canto.9.Verse.35.
 (2.) Perera, P.A. Arabi Yamini Vilasaya, Colombo. 1891.
 The introduction.

he must have been sniping at the Christian writers, too. Now we can examine the style of this ambitious translator:

" mesē nobō vēlāvak katākaramin siṭina atara, mūda desin itā bhayankāra vū ghoṣāvak hā haṇḍak da āsī bhayin trasta vūha. ekenēhi mūda vivarava eyin kalu kanuvak ākāra mokakdo pānanāṅga valākul dakvā usva nopenī giyabāv dutuha. mē darśanayen ovungē bhaya dvigunavī ekenehima nāṅgiṭa ovunṭa sāṅgavī siṭinṭa puluvanāyi sitā gasak mudunaṭa nāṅgunō. ehi pāmīni kṣanayēma mūda vivara vunāvū stānaya desa bālūkala ē kaluvū kanuva visālavī verala desaṭa gaman kala bāv duṭaha." (1.)

('When they had a little advanced, the sea became troubled before them, and there arose from it a black pillar, ascending towards the sky, and approaching the meadow. Struck with fear at the sight, they climbed up into the tree, which was lofty; and then they gazed to see what this might be.')(2;)

The Sinhalese translator does not try to give a word for word version. He presents the story, sometimes avoiding the poetic descriptions in the English translation.

As he has promised in the introduction the translator has succeeded in writing in idiomatic Sinhalese to a large extent. He has not, nevertheless, been able to employ a remarkably simple style. But neither is his language too high flown to be difficult for the general reader to understand despite sporadic Sanskrit words such as 'bhayankara',

(1.) Perera, op.cit. p.11

(2.) The Arabian Nights' Entertainments. Translated by Edward William Lane. Vol.1. London.1925.p.6.(The Sinhalese translators have used A.Gallan's and J.Mason's English versions of The Arabian Nights.)

'ghōṣā', 'trasta' and 'darśana'. As the story progresses the narrative style becomes simpler and more natural:

"pera ek rajek haṭa putrayek vūyēya.ē kumara vanāhi daḍayamaṭa itā priyamanāpa ātte viya. eheyin rajada ohuṭa ē sellama karaṇṭa avasara dunnēyi. nitarama putā samaga yaṇṭa āmati haṭa anakalēyi. ek dinak rajakumara tema daḍayamaṭa giyēya."(1.)

('The king above mentioned had a son who was ardently fond of the chase, and he had a Wezir whom he charged to be always with his son wherever he went. One day the son went forth to hunt.')(The Arabian Nights' Entertainments. .p.35)

The sentences are relatively short and the adherence to verb forms of the classical prose remains unchanged. In Sinhalese folklore too there are similar characters to those in Arabian Nights such as kings, ministers, merchants, beggars, exorcists, giants and mysterious caves etc. Both consist of similar incidents and structures to some extent. Therefore the translators of the Arabian Nights could not have faced any difficulty in finding suitable words, as they could follow the style of folk stories.

'Arabi Nisollasaya', as we mentioned above, was published in the same year as 'Arabi Yamini Vilasaya'. The latter was begun by T. Karunaratna and later continued by Albert Silva.(2.) Generally the style of this version is not very different from that in the previous one. A closer comparison will show

(1.) Perera, P.A. op.cit. p.57

(2.) Karunaratna, T. Arabi Nisollasaya. Colombo.1891.

that the style in Arabi Nisollasaya is more pedantic and elegant:

" Mesē śokayen pīḍitava hunkalhi ē situvili siyallama kṣanayakin dūrībhūta vīmaṭa kāranāvak duṭuyēya. māli-gāvehi rahas dorak hadissiyen vivrutavī strīhu visidenek in piṭata āvāhuya. ovun madhyayehi agamehesi tomōda vāḍiyāya. ema mehesiyagē rājaśrī līlāven pahasuvenma anit strīn gen venkoṭa hāṇḍina gata hāki viya. ē mehesi tomōda tārtariya raja taman sohayuruvu sultan agaraju hā kātuva daḍakeliyaṭa giyeyayi sitā ē rajahun gruha kavuluva samīpayāṭa parivāra strīn hā vāḍiyāya." (1.)

Following is the passage from the English version from which the above passage has been adapted:

('Now there were some windows in the King's palace commanding a view of his garden; and while his brother was looking out one of these, a door of the palace was opened, and there came forth from it twenty females and twenty male black slaves; and the King's wife, who was distinguished by extraordinary beauty and elegance, accompanied them to a fountain, where they all disrobed themselves, and sat down together.')(2.)

This style resembles that of the early Sinhalese novels. So it shows us how the styles of Sinhalese classical literature, Christian literature, newspapers and some other minor forms such as folklore, evolved towards the uniform style of the

(1.) Karunaratna. T. Arabi Nisollasya. p.4.

(2.) The Arabian Nights' Entertainments. op.cit. p.4.

Sinhalese novel of the mid-twentieth century. As we have seen, it was not only the style in the Sinhalese translations of Arabian Nights that inspired the early Sinhalese novelists but its content and form too. Despite the fact that most early Sinhalese novelists lack deep human interest or realistic depiction of character, they took a long step towards modernity when they began to write stories devoid of extreme religious purposes. Instead of moral teachings in the religious fable these novels are full of romance, violence, kidnappings, miracles and mystery. This shows us the extent to which The Arabian Nights has influenced the early Sinhalese novelist. Presumably some of the early Sinhalese novelists like Albert Silva and Simon Silva had read English novels, but they have not tried to translate any English novel into Sinhalese.

Literary and Religious Debates:

A number of Sinhalese writers have dealt with the importance of the various literary and religious debates that took place during the time under discussion in this chapter. They have all pointed out the effect these debates had on the language.(1.) These debates also helped a great deal in creating a tendency among the literati, as well as the common reader to some extent, towards critical reading.

(1.) Saratchandra, E.R. op.cit and Vikramasinha, K.D.P. op.cit.

The first of these literary debates was Savsatdamavadaya. This started as a result of a comment on the Sinhalese poem Gangarohanavarnanava, (1.), made by De Alwis in the introduction to his edition of Sidatsangara. (2.) This controversy and a series of others that persisted over a long period were carried out through newspapers and other journals. The eagerness and feeling for violent controversy was so high that some newspapers sprang up overnight just in order to express the views of one side. As most of the controversies were on interpretation of text or grammatical subjects, the debators were generally obliged to write in a pedantic style. But when they forgot their scholarly aims, as has happened several times, and were taken up by personal afflictions and irritated by ruthless criticism, they wrote in their natural speech and went so far as to use slang words. Because of this simplification of the language through severe criticisms, it became more and more flexible and suitable for writing about purely secular subjects.

The following excerpt from Savsatdam vadaya exemplifies the highly scientific style used in controversies at the beginning:

" tavada guruya, laghuya yana dedenaṭa vadā, mehi varna
nāti bavata kārana, svatrē svāro yanādiyehi sanyōgayakhu
hō vyanjana mātrayak hū hō parakoṭa āti svaraya tema

(1.) Disanayaka, Thomis Samarasekera. Gangarohana Varnana
Matara, 1932. Second Edition.

(2.) De Alwis, James. Sidat Sangarava. Translated into English
with introduction. Colombo. 1852.

guru bava hā jayatra mitrāyuyi yanādiyehi vigraham
 yi kī tāna vyanjana mātravū makārayā parakoṭa āti
 hrasvayāgē gurutvaya vū bavada, chandopadeśayehi,
 ekākṣaran bhaveduktā atyuktā dvayakṣaran bhavet'
 yanādiyehi ekākṣaraya uktānam chandasa veyi. dvayakṣara
 atyuktā nam chandasa veyi kī bava hā siyaluma ganayinut
 akṣara tuna tuninma vū bavayi. mē sāma kāranā nisāma sav
 sat dam kī maganaya varna tunakinma yuktaya. ē nam
 gurvakṣara tunaya, in antima dam kī gurvakṣanayehi 'm' ya-
 nna ōnāvaṭa dam kīvē ekama gurvakṣaraya dam kiya
 dekaṭa kaḍanta bāriya."(1.)

(-And there is nothing except the short and long letters
 here which is exemplified in such instances as 'svatre',
 'svaro' etc., which illustrate that the vowel preceding
 a double consonant or a final consonant is counted a
 long one and in the word 'vigraham' which is found in
 'jayatra mitrayu' etc. The short vowel before the con-
 sonant 'm' becomes a long one. In the science of prosody
 the metre of one syllable is called 'atyukta' while
 all the 'gamas' consist of three syllables (or letters).
 In the light of all this evidence, the 'magama' of the
 words 'sav sat dam' can be clearly seen as consisting
 of three syllables (letters). Therefore there are
 three long syllables, and although it has been intended
 to divide the last syllable 'dam' into two to make
 use of 'm', this last syllable cannot be so divided.)

This kind of highly Sanskritised style was used at the
 early stages of the controversies because the opposite party
 also wrote in a similar style. The style conforms with the
 subject though it is not easily understood by the common

(1.) ibid. introduction by Abhayavikrama. P.F. p.XIII

reader. As the time went by more and more controversies were started and more and more writers from various levels of the society took part in them.(1.) As is seen in the following example, the style was gradually getting simplified:

"mē mitrayāgē adahasa kopamana laguda? gurutumā kī pamanakinut piriven himiyan piligat nisāt śāstra nis-cayakāyi piligānīma agnāna gōcaraya. oya depolama śāstrayaṭa pramānayōnam, mitrayāge liyumē Pāninī, Kātyayana, Patanjali ādī sanskrita vyākaranācārya purātanayan-gē nam saṇḍahan kalē kumaṭada? mitrāyāṭama mitrayāgē vacana asthira vanakala, sessanta kesē sthira vēda? sanskrita vyākaraṇa śāstraya purātanayan visin tanā avasan kara tibena ekaki".(2.)

('How false is the opinion of my friend! It is not foolish to accept something owing to the fact that it was said by one's teacher and the principal of the Pirivena? If those two are the criteria for the matter, why has the writer mentioned the names of Sanskrit grammarians such as Panini, Katayayana, Patanjali etc., in his article? How could the writer convince others if he is not certain of his own ideas? Sanskrit grammar is a science which has been thoroughly perfected by the great scholars of the past!')

This passage is taken from an article written for the Sidatsangaravadaya (1889) which was carried out through the papers Satyasamuccaya and Lakminipahana. Although the language has been simplified more than that of the previous example,

(1.) Panca Mahavadaya. ed. by Dharmabandhu. T.S. 3rd. edition. Colombo.1970.

(2.) Satya samuccaya. 15th July,1889.

a considerable number of Sanskrit words still remain. The sentences are getting shorter and create a friendly and lively tone.

The following is a reply to the above writer. It too shows the tendency towards simplification:

".....īṭa hētuda anantayi. ē kesē vetat vyākaraṇa sahita sanskruta bhāṣāvehiḍa, paṭu taravu bhāratādi potvalada anūnavu paricaya āti, svabhāśāvehiḍa pramā-nakārīvu uttama ācāryayakhugē vāḍak bavama śiṣṭa sam-matayai. tavada tuḍāvē paṇḍitumāgēḍa siddhānta sangraha vyākhyānayaḍak daknālābeyi. ehi purātana vyākaraṇaya anuva mehiḍī liyā .tibena bava peneyi. sampradāya śakti-yada manāyi. mā visin mē saṇḍahā pāsiṭina kīm vyartha nam, mē balana madyastha vyaktayōḍa paṇḍitavarayōḍa mē kīm hāra ḍamati."(Lakminipahana,1889)

('.....and plenty are the reasons for it. It is obvious however, that this is a work by a scholar well versed in Sanskrit language and grammar and such great works as Bharata and those in our own language. Furhter, there is an exegesis of Siddhanta Sangraha by the pundit of Tudave. That also is written following the ancient grammar. If the facts I put forward turn out to be false; impartial critics and great scholars may throw them away.')

In early Sinhalese fiction, this kind of language has been used to a considerable extent. Some of those early writers of fiction such as Albert Silva and Piyadasa Sirisena have themselves taken part in controversies.

The following can be referred to as some of the most important controversies which are of interest to the student

of the history of modern Sinhalese literature: Janaki Harana Vadaya, Guttila Vadaya, Kavminkondola Vadaya, Kukavi Vadaya, Bentota kavi Vadaya and Varangana Vadaya.(1.)

The social background in early Sinhalese fiction.

Judging by the number and variety of literary and educational movements in the late 19th century we have discussed so far in this chapter we can assume that there must have been considerable social and nationalistic activities too, during this period, which were related to the emergence of a middleclass, whose life is often depicted in Sinhalese fiction. As Kearney observes, the new middle class in Ceylon soon set out to play a very active part in political and other fields:

"Modern political awareness originated with the appearance of sentiment for the reform of the colonial regime in the direction of Ceylonese self government. These political stirrings closely followed the emergence of an educated, affluent and largely urban middle class among the Sinhalese and Tamils late in the nineteenth century."(2.)

As he further says it was the expansion of Western education which largely created feelings for social reform and accentuated the growth of the new middle class with less connections with the masses and the ancient traditions of the

(1.) See for further detail: i. Obeyesekere. Ranjini D.

op.cit.pp.50-55

ii. Vikramasinhe. K.D.P. Nūtaṇa Simhala Sahityaya.pp.150-170

(2.) Kearney, Robert, N. op.cit. p.21

/ country; and more relations with the western civilisation:

"The rise of the middle class is intimately connected with the expansion of education in English, which gained momentum in the last decades of the nineteenth century. The increasingly available white-collar careers universally required literacy in English, the language of government and commerce."(1.)

The members of this class took active parts in the national revival later in the nineteenth century and it was they who struggled for political independence from the British administration, which they obtained in 1948. But despite their role in the political field this middle class maintained an alienation from the traditional culture and literature. It is true that there were some scholars like James de Alwis (1823-1878) and Sir Baron Jayatilaka (1864-1944) who contributed towards the revival of Sinhalese language and literature although they belonged to the English educated middle class.

Another aspect in the social changes during the British administration in Ceylon is the impact of commercialism and its relation with the middle class. The value system inherited from western commercialism caused, although very slowly, a remarkable change in the rural agrarian society, too. This change first began its appearance in the low-country of Ceylon as far back as the 18th century.

(1.) Kearney, Robert, N. p.23.

The well known Sinhalese novelist and critic Martin Wickramasingha writes that modern social change started with the commercial changes in the European period in Ceylon:

"For the long time of two or three hundred years our systems of bartering and other business affairs, and industries were undergoing a change due to European influence. Remote rural areas too underwent these changes later. And this was such a drastic change that even the social and geographical atmosphere of the country was affected. As a result of clearing vast areas of forests for new plantations, the landscapes have been disfigured to a large extent"(1)

These social and economic changes are depicted in modern Sinhalese fiction where the problems of the middle classes became a repeatedly exploited theme.

In the novels written at the end of the last century and at the beginning of the present century, it is only in a very limited way that the social changes are depicted. But such prolific novelists as Piyadasa Sirisena and W.A. Silva show that they were aware of the changes that were taking place at that time. The other novelists, as we may well see

(1.) Wickramasingha, Martin. Sinhala Lakuna. Colombo. 1948 p.68.

in the next chapter, were more concerned with light humour, religious propaganda or entertaining the reader by stereotyped love stories. For the Sinhalese Buddhist writers the most important problem was the spread of Christianity and western culture. When we discuss the novels of Piyadasa Sirisena we will see that he was a didactic writer and he looked at the social transformation from a religious point of view. At the same time he was extremely nationalistic.

The later novels of Martin Wickramasingha treat the social changes with an economic approach. But some other writers like Albert Silva who wrote prior to these two novelists do not seem to have much interest in their contemporary society.

Modern fiction or the form of 'novel' entered Sinhalese literature as a result of the English education in Ceylon. Most of the early novelists are known to be English educated and they must have read some English novels. When they wanted to write novels in Sinhalese they could not follow the English novels fully because they were writing for Sinhalese readers to whom this was an entirely new form.

There was a time when the Sinhalese people thought it a 'great thing' to be educated in English and considered vernacular education as mean and valueless as far as government service and social status were concerned. Even the

novelists of the 1950s and 60s deal with characters belonging to the middle class both urban and rural who have completely, or to some extent, severed links with the traditional Sinhalese society. This was the natural and essential result of the education they obtained from the English colleges under the British administration. As mentioned above, the activities of the missionaries were closely related with the education system.(1.) Therefore, we can agree with the observations of Mrs. Obeyesekere:

"The effects of British education policy had been to create a sharp dichotomy in the world of Sinhalese intelligentsia. The political, social and economic pressures within the society tended to emphasise the importance of an English education. The missionary societies, heavily subsidized by grants from the Government, ran most of the English schools. Their aims were primarily to proselytize and in order to do this effectively they had to wean the students away from the national language and the literature. Sinhalese literature was too closely linked with the heathen religion to be safely introduced into the school curriculum. There are still people who remember being punished as children for speaking Sinhalese during school hours." (2.)

(1.) See The Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register. Vol.IX October.1923. Part.II. The Government Schools 1804-1820 by L.J. Gratiaen.

(2.) Obeyesekere. Ranjini. D. op.cit. p.57.

Thus the English language became the only effective means for the middle class Sinhalese to join the rapidly westernising upper circles.

Those who joined this new society were the privileged ones. They climbed to high ranks in the administration and became the friends of the rulers. All the rich merchants, planters, doctors, lawyers, landed gentry etc., became the dominating social figures in the country. They adopted a European way of life, and even their houses and gardens were designed after European models to fulfill their bourgeois aspirations.(1.)

But beside the recipients of an English education and of the traditional education given by Pirivena schools, there sprang up a third group, a bilingual group in the society. They learned English in government colleges and Sinhalese, Pali, Sanskrit etc., in Pirivenas. In the revival of Sinhalese literature in the late 19th century and early 20th century, the contribution of these bilingual writers is of great importance. For instance, novelists of the early period such as Albert Silva, Simon de Silva, Piyadasa Sirisena, W.A. Silva and Martin Vickramasinha are all bilinguals (and so are most of the contemporary novelists.) (2.) The problems and structure of the bilingual society as well as the modern state

(1.) See Also : Ludowyk, E.F.C. The Story of Ceylon
London.1967.pp.218-225

(2.) Obeyesekere, Ranjini.D. op.cit. p.59

of the middle classes will be dealt with in later chapters in this study.

Our main concern in the present chapter was to examine the beginning of the Ceylonese Christian literature; its expansion and contribution to Sinhalese prose. We saw, in brief, how the Christian writers were busy with producing books on various subjects, although they never forgot their prime purpose, the propagation of Christian faith. These various writings are important in the history of modern Sinhalese literature since they saved the Sinhalese language from stagnation. There were some other activities and forces at that time which too are of importance in studying the evolution of prose styles. These we have examined under subtitles such as newspapers and periodicals, translation of world literary works, publication of folklore etc. All these aspects of the literary movement at this time contributed to the constant use, flexibility, enlargement of vocabulary, and development of the power of expression of the language. The discussion and analysis of the language of Sinhalese newspapers and periodicals need more detailed treatment, which I am not permitted by the scope and space of this essay.

*idea
Shed. by
some of the
- if
others*

CHAPTER III

The Beginning of the Sinhalese Novel.

Writers of modern Sinhalese literature differ in their opinions as to who was the first Sinhalese novelist. Saratchandra credits Simon de Silva (1874-1920) as the first Sinhalese novelist. "The first piece of original writing in Sinhalese that could be called a novel proper is A. Simon de Silva's Meena."(1.) Later on other writers have tried to give the credit to Albert de Silva(1866-1919)(2.) All these writers agree that there were two other writers before Simon de Silva and Albert de Silva viz. Fr. H. Kannangara who wrote 'Grāmapravruttiyak'(1876) and Isaac de Silva(1844-1907) the author of 'Vāsanāvanta saha Kālakanni Pavul'(The Fortunate and Miserable Families). The work of Kannangara, 'Gramapravruttiyak'(A village story) is apparently not available today but Saratchandra gives a short account of it. According to Saratchandra this too was a story about two families like that of Issac de Silva. He observes that 'the work itself does not possess much literary or artistic value'.(3.) If we agree with Saratchandra we have to admit that none of the three writers prior to Simon de Silva had understood the aspects of the modern novel.

-
- (1.) Saratchandra, E.R. The Sinhalese Novel. Colombo. 1950. p.83
(2.) De Silva, K.H. 'Sinhala navakatave purogamiya. Colombo 1966.
Vikramasuriya, S. 'Sinhala navakatavata mangapadima
Kandy. 1970.
(3.) Saratchandra, E.R. op.cit. p.78.

In our discussions on the works of some of these early writers of fiction we shall see that neither Isaac Silvanor Albert Silva has followed the structure or other techniques of the English novel which was at a highly developed stage at that time. Obviously both these writers must have read some English novels. It is through these readings that they must have considered writing fiction. Under some circumstances which we shall discuss later in this chapter they could have produced good novels following the English models, but they could not but succumb to more powerful indigenous trends. In his recent Sinhalese book on the origin of the Sinhalese novel Ariya Rajakaruna observes in detail how some of the earliest English works of fiction such as Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman* influenced Isaac de Silva.(1.) In the chapter on Simon Silva in this work Rajakaruna presents some newspaper reviews and other evidence showing how Simon Silva was considered in his time as the first Sinhalese novelist.

Rajakaruna quotes the following remarks from a review in the *Times of Ceylon* of 17th July 1905:

" Mr. A. Simon de Silva, of the P.W.D., favours us with a copy of a work of fiction in Sinhalese, the first of its kind in the vernacular."(2.)

(1.) Rajakaruna, Ariya. 'Sinhala Navakatave Arambhaya' Colombo.1972

(2.) Rajakaruna, A. op.cit.p. 130.

The rest of the evidence given by Rajakaruna too indicates that Meena, the work of Simon Silva was accepted by the critics and readers at that time as the first Sinhalese novel. In his conclusion Rajakaruna agrees with Saratchandra's opinion, i.e. Simon Silva was the first Sinhalese novelist.

It is true that Simon de Silva's work bears more distinguishing characteristics as a novel than those of Isaac Silva or Albert Silva, but we must not forget that they share many common features, too. Saratchandra takes Simon Silva as the first Sinhalese novelist by applying the modern theory of the novel and comparing his work with the work of Isaac Silva and Albert Silva. If we consider the Sinhalese writer who introduced the idea of writing fiction in the general sense of the term we will have to regard Isaac Silva as the first Sinhalese novelist. A long discussion on this subject seems, nevertheless, inappropriate for the present study. It will be quite sufficient for us to know that the Sinhalese novel originated as the result of collective efforts of those early writers such as Isaac Silva, H.Kannangara, Albert Silva and Simon Silva in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Saratchandra, who first introduced modern English criticism of the novel into Sinhalese literature, created a dichotomy in the Sinhalese novel by naming some of the early Sinhalese works as 'fiction' and some others as 'novels'.(1)

(1) Saratchandra.E.R. 'Sinhala Navakata Itihasaya La Vicaraya' p.39.

In our essay we shall be using both these terms interchangeably, as the modern reader tends to regard them as synonymous. Also most of the eminent critics writing in English today use both 'fiction' and 'novel' without much distinction. In English the word novel is not very old. As Ian Watt says, 'our usage of the term 'novel' was not fully established until the end of the eighteenth century.' (1) Fiction was the older term. After the writers started to produce works of fiction with more realistic aspects a new term was needed and 'the novel' came into existence.

"Briefly, they have seen 'realism' as the defining characteristic which differentiates the work of the early eighteenth century novelists from previous fiction." (2)

Various kinds of stories, fables, the epic and past history can be generally called fiction. These stories, despite some of them being creations of one person, hardly embody individual experiences or realistic pictures of life. The modern novel possesses these two qualities and differs from traditional fiction. But it was only a later development or a new aspect of fiction. When we are not confined to the strict sense of the term, we can use the term 'fiction' in a study of the novel. (3)

(1) Ian Watt. The Rise of the Novel. London 1967.p.10

(2) Ian Watt. *ibid*.p.10.

(3) Lubbock, Percy. The Craft of Fiction. London 1921. Raban, Jonathan. The Technique of Modern Fiction. London 1968. Booth, Wayne. The Rhetoric of Fiction, Chicago. 1961. Gass, William. H. Fiction and the Figure of Life. New York. 1970. Giddin, James. Postwar British Fiction. Cambridge. 1962. Lodge, David. Language of Fiction, London. 1966. (These books and many others deal with the modern novel although they use the term 'fiction'. They also reflect the fact that both the terms 'novel' and 'fiction' mean the same in the modern usage.

Isaac de Silva, author of family chronicles in Sinhalese.

Vāsanāvanta saha Kālakanni Pavul (1888) (The Fortunate and miserable families) by Isaac de Silva consists of two stories written with a religious purpose. The first part narrates the story of the lucky family. The head of the family, Charles, is a newly converted Christian. Against the will of his parents he marries Lucy because he realized she was very virtuous and religious. Soon after their marriage the husband and wife discuss Sinhalese customs of giving dowry and conventional restrictions for a girl on choosing her own husband. Lucy is worried because they have no child, but Charles consoles her and asks her to pray to God for a child. Despite growing poverty they live a true religious life. Another important character in the story, Fr. Ribb, becomes their family friend and moral guide who encourages their faithfulness by criticising other Sinhalese people for their reluctance to donate to the church. After some time Lucy gives birth to a daughter and she was called Sara. As the child grows she starts to dominate the story. When badly hit by poverty, the topic of dowry recurs in the family discussions. Sara grows up as a true Christian young lady pleasing both her parents and neighbours. Some time afterwards Lucy has two more children, Willy and Emily. Then the author devotes a few chapters to various happenings in the life of these three children. In some of these incidents Fr. Ribb finds a chance to convert more and more Sinhalese people to Christianity.

With the help of this priest Charles begins some business affairs and overcomes his economic difficulties. Then long descriptions of his generosity are presented, implying it to be the virtue of a true Christian. He helps a young man in the village, Joseph, and appoints him his assistant in business and later gives Sara to him in marriage. Being 'modern' parents, Charles and Lucy ask Sara, before the marriage, if she agrees with their choice. On occasions like these the author does not forget to criticise Sinhalese conventions. There is another character in the story, a rich 'Muhandiram' who asks for Sara for his son. But Charles does not change his decision. The wedding of Joseph and Sara takes place according to western styles. Thus the story of the fortunate family ends with the happy marriage of Sara and Joseph.

The second story presents a miserable family who were not faithful to their religion. This story is more naturalistic than the previous one. This is also set in the same rural background. Martinus, the husband, wished to get married to a religious woman like Lucy. Instead he finds Layisi Nona, a troublesome woman. John, their son, is mischievous and disobedient to both his parents and teachers. The mother makes him even worse through her over-care of him. Because of continuous quarrels in the family and the carelessness of the wife Martinus fails to protect his family from destruction. One day Martius sees, to his surprise, his wife attending mass. Soon afterwards he realizes it was not out of revived religious

faith but only as 'a fashion' that she went to the church. She gives expensive parties in order to imitate the westernized high society. In the meantime, through various incidents John's malevolent behaviour is presented. If Sara in the former story is the symbol of the good, John is the symbol of evil. The neighbours dislike the whole family because of John. Troubles befall Martinus one after the other due to the impudence and misdeeds of his wife and son and he lets himself fall into drunkenness and anger. After some time John runs away from home. Martinus finds it impossible to face society in such a wretched and miserable state and runs away too. Layisinona is left alone in the village, but she does not give up her hopes and goes in search of her husband and son. One day Martinus and John, who did not recognize each other, start fighting at a tavern. Quite coincidentally, Layisi Nona arrives there and in the end all three of them are reconciled.

In presenting this story Isaac Silva employs 'dialogue form' more than 'narrative form'. He follows the natural idiom of speech to a large extent in dialogues and employs a narrative style similar to that in the Sinhalese Bible. However much we find defects in Isaac Silva's work as a novel we cannot forget the pleasantness and freshness in his style. The following excerpts characterise the conversational style employed by Isaac Silva:

" itin caals magē katāntaraya paṭanganṭa yanakala maṭa
bohoma kanagātu hitenavā, enam magē taruna kālaya magē
hitāṭa bohoma bara ḍuka vēdanāva āti kālayakva tibunā.

" ē amaarukam siyallenma mā gālev mage deviyan vahansē tula mama bohōseyin satuṭu vemi. mamā bālakālaye siṭama / devabhaya āttiyakva siṭiya. tarunakālayedi maṭa haṭagat kalpanāva nam kasādayak nobānda inṭayi. esē kalpanāvunē mage ādahillaṭa bādhā novana hātiyaṭa, magē kāmattē hātiyaṭa puruṣayek tōrāgānimaṭa siritak sinhala minisun atarē nātinisāt....."(1.)

('So, Charles, to start to tell my story will be arousing many sorrowful feelings in my mind. That is because in my youth my mind was full of perpetual unhappiness and pain. Now I am pleased with my Lord who saved me from all my suffering. I have respected God since my childhood. When I was young I imagined I would never get married, because there is no custom among Sinhalese people to choose a husband according to my will; so as not to hinder my faith.....')

" āttaṭama oya kārānā gāna mamat bohoma bāradūreṭa hita- navā. vāḍiya tērum yaṇṭa vunē mama bhāryāvak vunāṭa passeyi. pradhāna koṭa strī tamange puruṣayinṭa katā- karantavat, puruṣayin gāna katākarantavat giyāmā, kopa- mana amāru viṇḍinavāda? lajjāvenavāda? puruṣayāge nisi- nama kiyantavat, 'umbeyi' kiyantavat kopamana amāruda? samahara strī puruṣayō'tamuseyi' kiya kiyā nan nadunana āyin vagē katakara gannā eka kopamana vihiluvakda?"(2.)

('Actually I think about these matters very seriously and began to understand these things better after I became a wife. For example, when a woman wishes to address her husband, or happens to talk about men in general how embarrassing she finds it? And how shy she

(1.) Silva, Isaac. 'Vasanavanta saha Kalakanni Pavul. Colombo. 1888. p.6.

(2.) ibid. p.14.

becomes! How difficult it is for them to call their husbands by their first names or to call them 'you'. Some husbands and wives call each other 'tamuse' as if they do not know each other intimately. How ridiculous that is!)(1)

The words spoken by Lucy suggest her honesty and straightforwardness in character. A phrase such as 'deviyan'vahanse tula mama.....'(I am happy in God) shows the hybrid aspects in the language of Christian writers of this period. The phrase 'deviyan vahanse tula..'agrees neither with the traditional idiom nor with the idiom of the speech. This cannot be taken as a substantial defect in Silva's style. His success in using the spoken language and mixing it with words and terms from literary language (especially that of the Sinhalese Bible) permeates the whole work. Slight modifications such as 'yanakala' instead of 'yanakoṭa', 'enam' for 'eka nan' or 'ē tamayi', 'kālayē' for 'kāle' etc., show that the author was not completely free from the tradition. Sentences such as 'bohoma bara duka vedanava.....', 'dēva bhaya ättiyakva..', 'bohoma bāradūreṭa hitanavā', 'kopamana amāru viñḍinavāda' etc., are fine examples of the writer's ability to fuse the ordinary speech with poetry.

The following instance exemplifies the use of more naturalistic conversational forms and the influence from drama

(1) Sinaalese 'uṃba' and 'tamuse' may be translated into French more accurately than into English as 'Tu' and 'Vous' respectively.

in the method of using dialogue:

- "Sara: 'malli api ada nikan iskōlayak vāge tiyamu. ara kāmārē iskōlelu. mama gurunnānselu. umbā lamayilu, hoñde?'
- Willy: 'hā itin mama potak aran iskoleta ennan goyyō'.
- Sara: 'ṭikak hitapan, mama gurunnānse vagē vēvālak hoyāgannakan.'
- Willy: 'goyyō, gānavānan maṭa bā.'
- Sara: 'nā mallī gahanṭa neveyi, gurunnānse vagē sāra kara kara nikan boruvaṭa atē tiyan inṭa.'(1.)
- (Sara: 'Brother, let's play school today, that room is the school, I am the teacher, and you are the children, O.K.?'
- Willy: 'O.K. girl, I'll take a book and come to the school.'
- Sara: 'Wait a minute, I'll fetch a cane just like the teacher.'
- Willy: 'Hey, miss, I won't come if you are going to cane me.'
- Sara: 'No, brother, I am not going to cane you actually, it is just to frighten you while I pretend to be the teacher.')

The innocent and playful behaviour of the young children has been captured here by using the natural words that children utter on similar occasions. These examples denote that Isaac de Silva was well aware of the significance of style in the novel. Phrases such as 'nikan iskōlayak vage tiyamu' and 'umba lamayilu' show Silva's keenness in capturing the nuances in the speech of the children. Unlike other Sinhalese writers

(1.) De Silva, Isaac. op.cit. p.24

of his time he did not use an ornate and elevated style even in descriptions. In descriptions as well as in the narrative we see an influence from the Sinhalese folklore:

- i. " itā elalu pāṭada, bohoma kalupāṭavū kaluruvā āti vataṭakuru āsda, māda lēpāṭavū piricca kammulda, idicca miris karal deḱak vanivū tol da, vāttukala nāsayaḱda, maṭṭanvū nalalada, siriyāven piruna punci muhuna āti Sara dakinnange puḱumayava siṭiyāya."(1.)
- ii. " Rib unnānse giya pasu savas vana turu Sara āgē kāmara-yen eliyaṭa āvēvat, mammaṭa mūna gahunēvat nāta. Caals da savas vena viṭa gedara āvēvī namut venadā purudu andamaṭa Sara issarahata giyēt nāta. Caals da geṭa goḱavī ohugē kāmaraṭa gos āṇḱum tibā enavat hā samaga Lusy issarahata āvit Caals geyi venin kāmara-yakata āṇḱagahagena gos Rib unnānse ā bavat, ara kārānāva Sara samaga kī hāṭit, Sara āṇḱū hāṭit evelē paṭan lamayā tavama kāmara-yen eliyaṭa nāvit muhuna āṇḱē obāgena innā bavat mēvana turu Lusy ēka nuḱuṭuvāk men unbavat siyalla Caals samaga kīvāya."(2.)
- i. ('.....with fair complexion; round, shining blue eyes; with plump cheeks red in the middle; with lips as red as two ripe chillies; with a nose like that of a statue with a shapely forehead and with pretty face full of charm little Sara was the wonder of all those who saw her.')
- ii. ('After the Rev. Ribb had left Sara did not come out of her room nor meet her mother until that evening. Although Charles came home at the usual time she did not come out to see him. Charles went into his

(1.) De Silva, Isaac. op.cit.p.24.

(2.) ibid.p.107.

'room, changed and came out and was met by Lucy, who took him into another room. Then she informed him that the Rev. Ribb had called and that he had spoken to Sara about 'that matter', and also how the child wept and had not been out of her room since. Lucy also told him that she had not paid any attention to all this.')

As we saw before the most memorable character in this story is Sara. Although she is made the typical romantic heroine, towards the end we find some originality in her character. In the first of the extracts above the terms 'elalu pata' (fair in colour) 'kaluruva ati' (painted black) 'piricca kammul' (plump or full cheeks) and 'vattukala' (sculptured) belong to the repertoire of the folk poet, not to the classical writer. This is a revolutionary change in Sinhalese prose, as the tradition was to employ elevated language in descriptions of women, cities, nature etc. Also the expression 'Sara dakin-nange pudumayava sitiyyaya' (Sara was the wonder of those who saw her) indicate how the Sinhalese writers of fiction had begun to coin new terms mostly under the influence of English to express certain ideas. Later, as the language began to develop we see hundreds of new terms being coined by the novelists.

{ An expression like 'dakinnange....' is entirely new in Sinhalese but it enchants the reader as it presents the beauty of the girl most powerfully. In the second extract what we see is the general narrative in this work. It is well balanced and controlled; it resembles the style developed by the translators of the Bible but not that of the Classical Sinhalese

literature. But the rhythm is similar to that of folklore. Consider the verbal forms, 'eliyaṭa āvēvat' (came out...), 'mammaṭa muhuna ḍunnēvat' (did not face her mother), 'issara-haṭa giyēt' (not went forth) etc., and phrases like 'evelē paṭan lamayā tavama...' (from that moment the child had not yet...), which show the extent to which the author borrows from the spoken language.

In the second part of the book, where we find the story of the miserable family, the author deals more with contemporary society. Being one of the first to write modern fiction in Sinhalese it is interesting to see this writer drawing characters from real life. In this story he could therefore employ the actual speech of the characters even more easily than in the first story although the two stories do not greatly differ from each other as far as the general style is concerned.

Albert de Silva writes the first historical novel

in Sinhalese:

Albert de Silva wrote four works of fiction during the last decade of the nineteenth century; Vimala (1892), Adara Hasuna (1892) (the love letter), Siribari (1894) and Vesak Dutaya (1894) (The messenger of Vesak), which were published under the title 'Albert's Novels'. Historically this title indicates that Albert Silva was the first writer who created novels in Sinhalese. He knew that the type of literature he was going to deal with was entirely new in the language and

named it 'amutu kata' (new stories) remembering the meaning of the English term 'novel'.(1.) His works, however, do not give any sign that Albert Silva knew the English novel very well. He did not know that a novel was supposed to be a story of a considerable length. His first work, Vimala, consists of only sixteen pages, Siribari of thirty one pages, Adara Hasuna of sixteen pages and Vesak Dutaya of forty pages. The writer described his fiction by the English word 'novels' and did not want to introduce them as short stories or novellas because either he did not know about these forms or he was not closely familiar with the techniques of the novel. His biographer, K.H. de Silva, says that he was very fond of reading English novels.(2.) Presumably he must have read English novelists such as Sir Walter Scott and Charles Dickens.(3.)

Albert Silva's first work Vimala (1892) centres upon an historical plot. This story is set in the reign of king Nissankamalla of Polonnaruwa. Vimala is the daughter of a poor lady who sets out with her on a pilgrimage to the temple at Dañbulla. On their way they stop for a while to rest in the forest and are seen by an ascetic who falls in love with Vimala and pretending to be a water-demon kills the old lady,

(1.) De Silva, K.H. op.cit. p.109

(2.) *ibid.*

(3.) See 'Sinhala Navakatave Arambhaya' op.cit. p.77

drowning her in a pond. After some time he finds Vimala who was hiding in a cave and tries to win her love. She realizes that it was this ascetic that killed her mother and whilst he is asleep she kills him. In her wanderings in the forest she finds a mysterious treasure cave and listens to minister Vikramabahu's conspiracy to kill prince Virabahu. Disguised as an ascetic, she goes to Polonnaruwa and tells the prince of the conspiracy and stays for sometime with the prince without revealing the truth about herself. After saving his life and helping get treasure from the cave which she obtained miraculously as a result of killing the evil ascetic, she reveals to the prince that she is really a girl. After the death of king Nissankamalla, prince Virabahu succeeds him and marries Vimala. That same night minister Vikramabahu kills both of them and ascends the throne.

This story is historical as far as the accounts of king Nissankamalla's reign, his son Virabahu's succession to the throne after him, his being killed the first night as king and Vikramabahu's gaining power are concerned. Vimala and her mother, the ascetic in the forest, and the episode of the treasure are creations of the author. Influence from the history of Ceylon, especially such works as Culavansa and Pujavali, and the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, is obvious in this story. The last of these works must have exerted a great influence on Albert Silva as he was familiar with and fond of it and translated it into Sinhalese.

Albert Silva's second work, *Adara Hasuna* (The Love Letter) (1892), though its name sounds very modern, embodies a plot set in olden times. The story begins with an episode of a hatred between two noble families, Mahanama and Kudanama. The former family has a daughter called Sobani with whom Nanda, the son of the latter family, falls in love. All this reminds one of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Just like in the great English poet's play the girl's father objects to this love affair. A friend of Nanda and a sorcerer (resembling the Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet*) help him visit Sobani who is kept in a chamber built in the middle of a river. After this incident *Adara Hasuna* differs from *Romeo and Juliet*; instead it develops as a Buddhist Jataka story. Mahanama finds Nanda in Sobani's chamber and shuts them both in a wooden box and floats it down the river. The young lovers do not drown but float to an island of shepherds where Nanda is accepted as the king. The end is not tragic as in *Romeo and Juliet*, as the lovers are happily united.

As we have seen Albert Silva was familiar with the English novel to some extent, and was well versed in classical Sinhalese literature. In his stories this knowledge is reflected. At that time *Romeo and Juliet* was popular among Sinhalese readers through its local adaptation.(1.) Some other aspects

(1.) See '*Sinhala Navakatava Arambhaya*'. p.81.

such as isolating a girl in a chamber built on a single pillar, opening the doors with the help of a sorcerer and floating away on a river or in the sea in a box or a boat as punishment are common features in ancient history and legends. The influence from these sources can be seen in other works by this author and some other writers who produced fiction immediately after him.

Siribari(1894) is considered the third work by Albert Silva. The plot is set in a mythical atmosphere, but no historical events are involved. This is longer than the two previous stories, includes more characters and is more complicated. Siribari, like the previous two works, has no human interest. It can be compared to a Jataka story or stories like Kādambari in Sanskrit literature. The impact of the 'Arabian Nights' is predominant. It seems only to be a collection of various episodes and events from a number of sources mentioned above, but not a well organized work of creative intuition.

Siribari is a princess born to the queen of Srideva of the city Sama. At that time the city was invaded by enemies and the king was away in the forest imprisoned by water-demons. This misfortune befell him when he was going to fetch some water from the lake Padmakara. In the forest he did not listen to his two ministers and followed a pretty maiden who was only a disguised demon. The 'maiden' leads the king far into the deep jungle and then appears in his true demon form, and imprisons the king in a cave. Some other demons eat one of the

two ministers and keep the other because they are pleased with his wisdom..The Queen who left the city at the time of the invasion goes to live in the jungle with the help of forest deities. The demons bring the king at night where his queen was sleeping and leave him with her. In the morning the royal couple wander about in the forest in search of the lake Padmakara; they arrive at it; but the king falls accidentally into it and is again imprisoned by water-demons. The kind forest deities look after the queen; she gives birth to a daughter, who is named Siribari. At the city Sama, Vikramaraja, who carried out the invasion, becomes king, and appoints one Vidyasara as his minister. Siribari grows up in the forest to be a pretty princess. In his prison in the lake the king Srideva meets his old minister and escapes with him. On their way towards the city they come across the Queen and Siribari. The king, unable to recognize them, fancies that it is another trick of demons and cuts the Queen in two with his sword. The guardian deities of the Queen become angry and take the king and his minister to an island. The king helps the inhabitants when they are attacked by barbarians and he becomes the king of that island. There he collects great wealth but having no limit to his greed he kills his old minister, throwing him into a well as a sacrifice to get the treasure hidden in that well. He encounters several more adventures on that island and with the help of a princess with mysterious powers returns home. On the way he meets

Vikramaraja, the new king of Sama, and kills him. By that time the Queen whom he killed by cutting into two, had been revived again by the deities and was living in the city with Siribari and Vidyasara. Srideva meets them and after much rejoicing and celebrating he gives Siribari in marriage to Vidyasara and makes him the king of Sama.

In this story the author depends on Buddhist stories, Sanskrit stories and the Arabian Nights to a large extent. Most of the incidents are mixed with superhuman powers and mysteries and miracles. Silva incorporates incidents of giving life to the dead, cursing and giving boons, following Sanskrit stories and the Arabian Nights. He does not think of creating a naturalistic or realistic story. Nor does he attempt to create instructive, didactic stories like those in the Buddhist literature. His fiction is in between Buddhist stories and those of the Arabian Nights.

The last of Silva's works, Vesak Dutaya(1894) (The Vesak Messenger), differs considerably from the three works we discussed so far. Although it is said to be the longest of Silva's works, and probably the most important one, I have not been able to read it. Some writers like S. Vikramasuriya, K.D.P. Vikramasinha and K.H. de Silva seem to have read it and through their accounts we can learn about the plot and language of this work.(1.)

(1.) See Vikramasuriya.S. 'Sinhala Navakatavata Mangapadima' Kandy, 1970 p.73. Vikramasinha,K.D.P.'Nutana Sinhala Sahityaya.' Colombo.1965. K.H.de Silva. op.cit.

S. Vikramasuriya gives us a detailed account of Vesak Dutaya, according to which we learn that this is the only work in which Albert Silva deals with a contemporary social problem. This story has another significant feature, the employment of a style somewhat different from the three former works of the author. The story centres upon a Sinhalese youth who fails to gain the love of a Sinhalese girl who belonged to a different society with which he was incompatible. He was named Vesak Dutaya as he was born on a Vesak day. The girl whom he loved was westernized and he finds that it was impossible for him to get along with her unless he learnt western languages and manners. His love is so strong that he decides to go abroad to elevate himself to become an apt suitor. While he is serving on a foreign ship the girl plays around with some other 'modern' youths and gives up her relation with Vesak Dutaya and gets married to a lawyer. After a year the young man comes home, learns about the unfaithfulness of the girl and wanders about as a mendicant visiting a number of ancient places of religious and historical interest. He becomes more and more religious and tries to spread Buddha's message by tying pieces of palm leaves, on which he had inscribed a Buddhist stanza, onto the legs of birds. This leads to another episode. We are now removed from modern society and read about romances of a princess and a prince. Vesak Dutaya helps these young royal lovers to get married and lives in a forest as a hermit until his death.

This story apparently consists of two main episodes; the love story of Vesak Dutaya and that of the princess and prince. The first of these episodes, says Vikramasuriya, seems to be original but the second one is built on various parts taken from ancient legends and his favourite source, the Arabian Nights. Vikramasuriya further observes that 'Albert Silva has attempted to make Vesak Dutaya more natural than his previous stories'(1.) According to the summary of the story given by Vikramasuriya, we find that in this work too Albert Silva has used mysterious incidents, miracles and other unnatural features. For example, in his seclusion Vesak Dutaya encounters a Naga (cobra) which leads him to a hidden treasure and sees an apparition of a monk who vanishes soon after giving him a sermon; and these incidents prevent the story from being naturalistic. Albert Silva treats the time quite freely and mixes up contemporary characters with those from ancient times. This we can assume is a result of his being unable to distinguish modern fiction from that in Arabian Nights.

The characters of Vesak Dutaya and his girl friend deserve little more consideration. These two characters, and other minor ones such as the marriage-broker and the lawyer, become prototypes for a number of later Sinhalese novelists. Albert

(1.) See Vikramasuriya, S. op.cit.p.80

de Silva created a picture of a promiscuous girl with modern ideas and manners. She did not care for religion or old morality like Vesak Dutaya. Early Sinhalese fiction-writers were very fond of criticising these fashionable ladies and created exemplary characters like that of Vesak Dutaya who are faithful to Buddhism, to traditions of the nation and to the language.

Now we can examine the style used by Albert Silva in these stories. In the first three books there is a tendency towards the ornate style of classical Sinhalese literature, especially a resemblance to the style of such old works as Butsarana, Saddharma Ratnavaliya, Saddharmalankaraya etc. In his recent book 'Sinhala Navakatave Arambhaya' (The origin of the Sinhalese novel) Rajakaruna strives to establish an opinion that it was mainly from Saddharmalankaraya that Albert Silva drew inspiration as regards the style.

" There is a close resemblance of the language of Silva with that of Saddharmalankaraya. He follows traditional sentence structures; employs classical similes, rhetoric etc., to a great extent. Silva's vocabulary is similar to that of classical literature." Rajakaruna further says that "Silva's language is not as elegant as that in Saddharmalankaraya; and nor is it as poetic as the latter." (1.)

As he presented historical and unrealistic stories Silva

(1.) Rajakaruna, A. Sinhala navakatave Arambhaya. .p.125.

could write in an ornate and classical style. The scarcity of dialogues in his works may have been connected with his use of pedantic vocabulary. The following example shows his indebtedness to Sanskrit prose and to the Sinhalese prose of the 12th and 13th centuries:

" Kīrti Śrī Nissanka narapati temē polonnaru pura rājya-
śrīyaṭa pāmīniyē. hetema manā gunāngayen hebunē. yasasin
purasaṇḍa pāradi. sakala lōkayaṭa karunālakṣana kiri
dena mātruvak vānivī. svakīyayan lakṣana padmavanayaṭa
rivimaṇḍalak menvī. saturan lakṣana hastin māṇḍaṭa
balatara migaradek hā sadrusa vī, budusasun diyunuvaṭa
kāmati hetemē, rangiri daṁbulu vehera prakrutimat karavī,
śailamaya siharū karavī."(1.)

('The glorious king Nissanka was reigning at Polonnaruva. He was adorned with many a good quality. He surpassed the moon by his glory. In benevolence, he was like a mother to the whole world. He was the sun to the Lotus-pond of his relations. And he was a lion among his elephant-like foes. Doing a great deal of service for the betterment of Buddhism, he restored 'Rangiri Dambulu' temple and had stone figures of lions made!')

This is a description of a king who does not play a significant role in the story. The writer, nevertheless, imitating the classical writers includes descriptions of kings, cities etc., in this elevated style. In our discussion above on the work of Isaac de Silva we saw that he was different in his style of descriptions.(2.) If we compare the passage

(1.) Silva, Albert. Vimāla. Colombo. 1892. p.1.

(2.) See page

describing Sara with the following one we can see that Isaac de Silva followed only the figures of language of the folk poet and not that of the classical poet. When Albert de Silva describes a girl he employs the stereotyped similes and metaphors of the ancient Sinhalese literature.

" āṭa Vimalā nam eka diyanīyak siṭṭiyāya. yovunaga pat ō tomō sakala rūpaśriyen sampūrṇa vi. āgē varala miyuru pilkalambak men duṭuvan priyakalē. digunet yuvala nilupul sadisi viya. raktādarayugmaya pravālānkura siri dāri. dadapela mutupelak men dilunē. gela dhavala sankayak men hebuneyi. payōdhara yugmaya svarṇahansa potakayan dini. vaṭora ranraṁba kanda siri pāvi. keṇḍā dunukē kākulu sirin dilunē. carana raktapadma yugmayakmen manā rū ātīvi". (1.)

('She had a daughter called Vimala. She was extremely attractive. Her hair was as beautiful as feathers of a peacock. Her two eyes were like blue water lilies. The red lips were like small shoots of coral. Her teeth shone like a line of pearls. Her neck was like a white shell. She surpassed golden geese with her breasts. Her thighs reminded one of golden trunks of banana trees. Her legs glittered like 'dunuke' buds. Her feet were as attractive as red lotuses.')

The Sinhalese reader has been familiar with this kind of poetic description of women for centuries and he does not find them interesting or fresh any longer. Isaac Silva in his description of Sara used similes of some freshness which are

(1.) Silva, Albert. Vimala. p.2.

closer to reality and help the reader to create a mental picture of the girl. By comparing a description from a classical work with the description of Vimala we will be able to see the extent of Albert Silva's indebtedness to the ancient poet.

The following is a quotation from 'Sinhala Bodhivansa' written in the 13th century:

".....ē mahā bodhisatva temē.... tamalu liyasē nilvū suvaṇḍa ättāvu keśākalāpayan äti, punsaṇḍa maṇḍala sē saumya muhuna äti, supipi nilupul malsē manognavū äs äti, devdunusē vakvū nilvū bāma ati, baṇḍuvada petise ratvū adara pallavayan äti, devdunuse vakvū nilvū bāma äti, baṇḍuvada petisē ratvū adhara pallavayan äti, svarna kuṇḍalābharanayen hobavana lada kapolasthalayan äti, payodhara nāmati svarnahansayinge sangamayāṭa pāmīniyāvū ākaśagangājaladhārāvanse babalannāvū itā manogna muktāhārayan äti.....ran mevuldamakin vaṭaka-ranalada pululukula äti, ätsonḍaksē kramayen vaṭavū ūrūyugalayak ätitamahaṭa ābharanayek vānivū, āsaṭa van nidrāvak baṇḍu vū bimbādēvin agramahēśikā koṭa....."(1.)

(' That great Bodhisatva married princess Bimba as his queen consort (whose beauty can be described as follows); her sweet smelling hair was as blue as the 'tamalu' vine, her face was as ^{lovely} charming as the full moon, her eye-brows were as dark and curved as the rainbow, her lips were as red as the petals of the hibiscus flower, her cheeks were adorned with the golden ornaments in her ears; and the lines of pearls she wore were like

(1.) Sinhala Bodhivansa, ed. Alav isi Sabihela, Colombo.1965 p.10.

the waters, of the 'space-river' come to seek the company of her golden geese-like breasts. Her broad waist was decorated with a golden ornament called 'mevul' her thighs were as round as the trunk of an elephant, and she was herself an ornament to him and was like a sleep to the eye.)

By comparing this passage with that of Silva, we can see how he has followed the same method of describing a girl as the classical writer. The figures of language, similes, metaphors etc., are the same as used by the Sanskrit poets. It was considered in ancient times to be in keeping with tradition to use these 'hackneyed' figures of language. A writer or poet did not need talent to use them but only the knowledge of the tradition. When describing a woman or a man using this method, it is obvious that one cannot individualise the characters. Perhaps Albert Silva was not interested in such depiction of character, but only in exhibiting his knowledge of classical poetic tradition.

Perhaps it was partly because of this highflown style that Albert Silva could not gain popularity as a writer of fiction. Silva himself admitted later that his attempt was a failure because of the poor response of the readers. In a letter he sent to Simon Silva acknowledging the receipt of 'Meena' Albert Silva admits his failure as follows:

"I too, some time ago produced and published 'Siribari', 'Vimala' and some other small books but received poor response. I hope the same fate

will not befall Meena." (My translation)(1.)

We mentioned above that Albert Silva's sentences are of the same structure as those of classical Sinhalese prose of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. We can compare the following passage with the prose of Gurulugomi or Vidyacakravartī which we discussed in chapter I.

"devi belen kumariya bisavunge citta lakṣana kṣīra sāgarayaṭa purasaṇḍa maṇḍala baṇḍuvī. kumariya sat hāviridi vayasāṭa pat vūvāya. lena asala vrukṣa mastakayehi pakṣīhu nāḍakalo. laḍāri ē asā satuṭu vī. nuduru pipi mal genavut mavhaṭa dini. mav bisava ā uvana siṃba mal gattā. lena dora valikeli, mav saha suratal bas deḍī." (2.)

('By the blessings of the gods the baby girl became like the waxing moon to the milky ocean of the mind of her mother. In time this baby grew to be seven. Birds sang in the trees near the cave. The child listened to them delightedly. She picked some wild flowers and brought them for her mother. Taking the flowers the mother kissed the child. Playing in front of the cave, she talked to her mother.')

This is the same sentence pattern and figures of language as used by the classical authors I mentioned above. Unlike

(1.) "kalakāṭa ihaṭin min māviṣṭin mē vilasnen
siribari vimalā āḍī kuḍā pot tanālā
parasidu karavū mut ē tāṭin mā sitū les
anubala noladat 'meena' esē nam novēmāyi" as quoted by
S.Vikramasuriya. op.cit. p.130.

(2.) Silva, Albert. Siribari. Colombo.1894.p.8.

those authors, Silva prefers short, simple sentences, but his verbs agree with traditional grammar. For centuries this style had been used to narrate courtly romances and religious parables. It is called 'literary Sinhalese' as it is never spoken even by the elite. The writers of olden times employed it because it suited their purpose. For the requirements of the modern novelist, this is not an adequate style.

The style in *Vesak Dutaya* differs from the style in Silva's early works as its story is partly modern. To examine the style in *Vesak Dutaya*, we can take some passages from S. Vikramasuriya's quotations:

- (i) "Vesak dūta temē taruniya visin evana lada kaviya gena kiyavā balā apamana prītiyaṭa pāmīna ā dākīmaṭa taman ena dina dānum dī yāvī. ō tomō baṭahira diga bāṣā pavā dat, ingirisin āsrayakirīmen maṇḍak parasirit purudu taruniyak bāvin ohu ena bāv danvā yāvu dina udaya manamālayaku piligānīmaṭa hobanā paridden sāsrasunāya. edina udayama nāṅgiṭa 'colgate' saban gā muva sōdā varala telgā pīrabāṇḍa atakara barana pālaṇḍa paṭa vatak hāṇḍa piyayuran vasā manā dākum āti hāṭṭayak lā 'lucilia' nam suvaṇḍapān isa gena sāsasi siṭiyāya."(1.)
- (ii) "hāṇḍi gāruppuvalin kāmāṭa purudunāti vesak dūta temē taruniya satuṭu kirīma saṇḍahā eyin kaṇṭa
paṭāṅgat kala āta eya mahatsināvakāṭa kārana vūyēya. tarunayāda itā lajjāvaṭa pāmīna kopamana sāsra ugat numut parasirit nodāna siṭīma itā ninda-
vakāyi sitā eya hoṇḍākāra igenīmaṭa adahas kaleya.

(1.) Vikramasuriya, S. Sinhala navakatavatamanga padima.

edina taruniyage sināva nisā lajjāvaṭa pat ohuṭa
baḍapurā kāmada nopilivan viya. ebāvin vāḍivelā pra-
māda novī vahāma kāma avasan koṭa taruniyagen avasara
gena siya nivesaṭa hārī āyēya."(1.)

- (iii) "tāgi genā nisā atisāya satuṭaṭa pāmīni nītigna temē
ohu samaṅga svalpa vēlāvak katākaramin siṭa nidahas
vīmaṭa gurukamda kiyā dina. inpasu nītigna temē tamāṭa
hobinā taruniyak asala gamakin parikṣākara dānumdīmaṭa
pilivandāyi āsī. mesē āsūkala ihatakī taruniya gāna
kapuvāṭa matak vī siyalu toraturu kī kala ē gāna ohugē
sitada satuṭu viya." (2.)

- (i) (Receiving the poem sent by the girl, Vesakdutaya read
it with pleasure and informed her of the date that he
was going to visit her. The girl was familiar with
European languages and also had learnt western manners
by associating with English people. In the morning of
his visit she dressed and made herself up as if she
was going to receive a bridegroom. She got up early
in the morning; washed her face with 'Colgate' soap;
did her hair nicely applying some oil; put on various
ornaments on her neck and arms; covered her breasts
with a fine jacket and perfumed herself with a scent
called 'Lucilia'.

- (ii) ('Vesakdutaya made the girl laugh by trying to use
knives and forks despite his inexperience of how to
use them. The youth became ashamed of his unfamiliar-
ity with foreign customs and decided to learn them.
As he was very embarrassed that day due to the girl's
laughing at him he could not even eat his fill. So
without much delay at the table he took leave of the

(1.) Vikramasuriya, S. Sinhala navakatavata manga padima. p.82

(2.) ibid. p.88

girl and returned home."

- (iii) ('The lawyer was pleased with him as he had brought him some presents; spent some time talking to him and instructed him on how to get rid of the charges against him. Then the lawyer asked him whether he could look for a suitable girl for him. When he was asked this, he remembered at once, 'that girl' and informed the lawyer who was pleased about her'.)

As is seen in these examples this vocabulary is different from that in the other works of Albert Silva. The first quotation consists of three long sentences; as Silva usually does not write long sentences this shows him concentrating on developing a style to suit the subject. Some words such as 'teme' 'o tomo' 'hobana' and the verbs indicate that Silva had not completely broken ties with the classical styles. In the two subsequent examples the 'newness' of his style is more obvious. This is the style which was later developed into a uniform narrative in the Sinhalese novel. Lack of difficult Sanskrit words, rare use of figures of language taken from classical literature and tendency towards the idiom of the spoken language are the principal characteristics of this style. As Vikramasuriya has remarked, this is an elegant and a more suitable style.(1.)

(1.) Vikramasuriya, S. op.cit. p.101.

Simon de Silva(1874-1920) was interested in the internal states of characters.

After the works of Albert Silva and with the beginning of the twentieth century we can see the appearance of a number of writers of fiction. The growing taste of readers for fiction, caused by the serializing of various stories in newspapers and journals, translations of world literary works, and perhaps the works of Albert Silva must have caused the sudden proliferation of fiction-writing in Sinhalese at the beginning of the century. It was only a few of the early fiction-writers who produced works of any literary importance with long lasting value. Even among those few hardly any have created a work which can be evaluated thoroughly according to the modern theory of the novel. But some of those writers deserve our consideration as they have contributed towards the development of the language of Sinhalese fiction. A unique figure among early Sinhalese novelists is Alutgamage Simon de Silva.

Simon Silva's novels are as follows:

1. Mina (1905)
2. Teresa (1907)
3. Ape Agama. (1910)(Our Religion).

Mina is a novel which is highly praised by eminent Sinhalese critics such as Saratchandra. Considering its unique features among the other novels of the period Saratchandra credits Simon Silva as being the first real Sinhalese novelist.

The most interesting aspect of this novel is the faithful depiction of character and the expression of the author's insight into the human mind.

The main character, Mina, is the daughter of Abdul and Lencihamy. Abdul runs an illegal booth for gamblers. Mina, who lives there disguised as an old woman, is kidnapped by a thief and on the road rescued by a youth who had spoken to her before. To avoid the thieves he takes Mina into a forest. There they have many adventures, such as killing a tiger. Most of the important incidents take place in the forest when they are receiving the hospitality of an old man and his young son in a large cave. They go to Kandy after some time when Danny, the youth who brought Mina into the forest, is stabbed by a thief. There he meets one of his old friends; quite coincidentally, the doctor who comes to cure him. This doctor, while looking after the sick youth advises him to give up his relation with Mina and to come with him to meet more refined girls. Danny follows the advice, forgets Mina and enjoys himself in the company of girls of the town. Mina is not the type of girl to be heartbroken; she explains the situation to Pavulas, the son of the old man in the forest. This selfcontrolled youth accepts Mina's love, firstly out of sympathy and secondly out of his own tender sentiments.

Mina's character is the first complicated picture of a woman in the history of the Sinhalese novel. She is a girl from an ordinary family but possesses a high degree of com-

monsense and courage. She is not prepared to obey her parents when she sees they are wrong; nor is she prepared to devote her whole life to her first love. The author likes to portray characters of free will who have both good and bad qualities like any human being. As a novel *Mina* is not of great literary standards because some unnatural incidents intervene in the realistic flow of the story. Although Simon Silva sees deep into the minds of people, he was not a fine craftsman.

Simon Silva's two later novels are, unfortunately, not available to me. We can learn about them from Saratchandra and Rajakaruna, especially the latter who gives a detailed, critical account of these novels.(1.) According to the synopsis of *Teresa* and *Ape Agama* given by Rajakaruna, Silva seems to have created more complicated female characters here than that of *Mina*. Despite various nationalistic and religious trends and forces of his time Silva has produced liberal characters who question the necessity of any kind of religion for the present time. *Sisiliya* in *Ape Agama* is a woman who questioned thus the authenticity of God and the honesty of the priests. She admits that she is not leading a 'pure' life but at the same time reveals that she has to live her life

(1.) See Rajakaruna, A. op.cit. pp.167-229

under circumstances which make it unavoidable. Silva's characters proclaim that controversies over religious subjects are meaningless; and this shows that he was different in his attitudes towards issues like religious propaganda with which some other novelists at that time were preoccupied. Teresa and her mother-in-law Mrs. Peiris, and one of the male characters, Vijayasundara, are all presented with some intricacy as credible characters who have faced important problems. Silva preferred to portray complicated characters as well as dealing with a number of them at the same time. Thus in Teresa we find two female characters and two male characters who are treated almost with equal care and depth. In Ape Agama, Sisiliya, Miss Perera and Mrs. Bolwin are the female characters and Gunasekara, Kaviraj and Jayatunga are the male ones. At this early stage of the Sinhalese novel, it is surprising to see this author producing such large scale works as these.

Considering the virtues of the novels of Simon de Silva, eminent Sinhalese critics have, although belatedly, paid him due regard. "If he were to write his novels nowadays, he could become a great figure", remarks Martin Vikramasinha.(1.) Saratchandra has the highest praise for Simon de Silva:".....in the few novels he wrote he provided ample evidence of possessing gifts of a sort that have been rarely exhibited, if at all, by subsequent writers upto the present day. In his ability

(1.) See Rajakaruna, A. op.cit. 167-229

to portray human nature in situations that demand a keen insight into its complex manifestations, he stands almost unrivalled in the whole field of Sinhalese literature."(1.)

The style in Silva's works should be considered as of high level because of the ease with which he controls it and the lucidity of expression.

As Rajakaruna has quoted, Simon de Silva's attitude to the language was 'writing in such a style as could be easily understood by his sisters and brothers(fellow countrymen)''(2.) Let us examine how faithful Silva was to this pledge of writing in a simple style:

" mesē ovun das gatakarana kālayehi ek dīneka Lencihāmi āgē diyanīyaṭa katākoṭa laṅga hiṇḍuvāgena"mina, uṁba samaṅga kathākaranta satuṭu kāranayak maṭa tibē. uṁba dān lōkaye sirit andamaṭa svāmiyaku pāvāgannā vayasata pāmīna siṭinnehiya. uṁbē ugatkam gāna balanakoṭa apē tarātiramvala uṁbaṭa nisi svāmiyeku mē asalaka nātibava penē. itin uṁbē piyāge satuṭa nam apē mitravu "Karolista" uṁba pāvādīmaṭayi. ē gāna uṁba kiyanne mokodāyi"āda-ravanta lesa āsīya."

('While they were living like this, one day Lenchihamy called her daughter and made her sit beside her and said to her 'Mina, I would like to discuss a certain matter with you. Now you have reached the right age to be married. It seems that there is no suitable suitor for you in our neighbourhood when we think of your learning. So your father wishes to marry you to our friend 'Karolis'. What do you say about it?' she asked tenderly.')

(1.) Saratchandra. op.cit. p.83

(2.) Rajakaruna, Ariya. Sahitya ruciya ha navakata vicaraya. Colombo.1970.p.47

This is the general narrative style in Mina. Sentences are short and simple. This style is not completely devoid of Sanskrit words, for instance, 'svami' 'mitra' 'karana' etc., in this passage. These however were absorbed into the Sinhalese language and they can be understood without much effort or any knowledge of Sanskrit. Apart from the intervention of these words the style in general is similar to that of folk-tales. The first phrase in this passage 'mese ovun davas....' reminds us of folk stories, though it is some times found in classical works too. Although the tone is similar to that of forkllore this writer tends to modify his colloquial style. Some of the words of Mina's mother are so modified but the tone is natural. When she says 'uṃba samaga katākaraṇṭa satuṭu kārānayaḥ' we feel it is her natural speech, but when she says 'tibē' we feel it is not; and so with all the other verbs such as 'siṭinnehiya', 'penē', 'āsiya' etc. The phrases, 'uṃba dan...' 'uṃbe ugaṭ kam gana balanakota' 'ē gāna uṃba kiyanne mokodāyi' are taken from natural speech of characters depicted in this novel.

This passage also shows another feature in early Sinhalese novels; that is the tendency to summarise conversations of characters.

There is no doubt that this style was not too elevated for the 'brothers and sisters' of the author to understand. Our concern here is how far this was suitable for the work as a novel. The same style is used to present characters absorbed

in deep thought or introspection:

" Mīnāda māniyāngen ivatva kāmārayaṭa gos taniva vāḍigena kalpanā karaṇṭa paṭangattīya. karōlis yayi saṇḍahanvū tānāṭta ē asala kaḍayaka velaṇḍāma karana pāṭaraṭa tarunayeki. ohu vayasīn visipas āviridi pramāna vū, śarīra śaktiyen ūna nuvū, striyek satuṭu karaṇṭa puluvan vū ayeki. ohukerē ālayavenṭa bāri maṇḍāyi mina tamāgenma āsīya."

" tarunāvastāvehi sita itā prītimat heyin muhunehi pātu-runāvu priyatāvaya ātīviya yutuyi. ohugē muhuna vayas-gatavū tāpasayekugē men gāmburu svabhāvaya usulayi. eya taruna vayasa pasuvū gāhānunṭa sāheyi. namut visi vayasāṭa lanvū, bālavū sellam sahitavū maṭa priya novē. ohu dān magē rūpaya nisā lolva siṭī. ohu ataṭa mā asuva svalpa dāvasak gatavana viṭa ē āsāva nāṭiveyi. inpasu itirivannē ohugē gāmburuvū kalpanā sahita lavkika svabhāvayī. eviṭa sāhalluvū sāpa āsāvu maṭa ohuge samāgama duk sahita vē. ebāvin mama oḥuṭa akamāti vīma varada novēya." (1.)

('Mina left her mother and went into a room and began to think. The person who was mentioned as Karolis was a youth from the low-country who was employed in a nearby shop. He was about twenty five years old, of sound physical strength and capable of making a woman happy. So why could she not love him? Mina asked herself.'

'When one is very happy in youth one's face should be pleasant. His face is of pensive nature just like that of an old hermit. Such a face is suitable for those women who are past their prime; but it is not pleasurable to a playful, girl like me who is almost twenty.

'Now he likes me because I am attractive. That desire will diminish in him a few days after possessing me. Thereafter only his pensive, worldly nature will remain. To me, who am fond of comfort and enjoyment, that mood will be a trial. It is not wrong of me, therefore, to reject him.")

This style, though it is not extremely sensitive, is significant because an internal conflict of character is expressed by it, in which respect, it can be taken as suitable for the novel. It is rich in the sense that it was developed by some later novelists. The ordinary fiction writer at that time was not as careful as Simon de Silva in revealing the thoughts of his characters. In the above passages we see that Mina, though she was a village girl, thinks of her future and personal problems like a modern girl. The accepted 'good' Sinhalese daughter is not supposed to criticise her parents' ideas and reject them as Mina did. As already pointed out, Simon Silva was fond of creating this type of independent female character. Here we see Mina against her parents' will deciding to reject Karolis because she did not see any physical attraction in him; also she thought that she would be ignored by him after a few days of living together. She could imagine that, because they were not in love with each other and she was sure she would not be able to love him because she thought he would be unable to give her the comfort and enjoyment she needed like any other girl of her age.

Mina, who refused the proposal of her parents, promised

to marry the youth she chose herself and determined to love him until the end of her life. However, as soon as another handsome youth came into the scene, she saw how unstable her determination was. This interesting juncture in her life is presented, not through direct information by the author, but through certain incidents creating dramatic effect.

"saṇḍa pahanin hā gangā sulaṅgin āvisunā vū ohu māgē ārakṣāva misa vena deyak nosevvēya. eyin ohugē manā gatiyat mā kerē āti sālakillat hoḍḍā kāra oppuvē. ohugē vacana valinut muhunēnut mā kerehi āti tada ālma elidāravve. ohugē utsāhaya, nomālibhāvaya pasugiya dasas kīpaya tula maṭa dakiṇṭa lābuni. ebāvin ohuṭa magē kāmā-tta dīma sāhēyayi sitē. esēvuvat magē sitehi mē anit tarunayā kerehi nokiyahāki premādhyāśayak pānānaga tibē. palamuven mahallāgē kathāva āsīmēdī ohuge nirbhītabhāvaya, premavantakama gāna ohukerē satuṭu vīmī. devanuva ohugē rūpayā dāka āsāvīmī. eya pavatina sthira āsāvakda nātnam diyabubulak men viyāki yana ekak da kiyā maṭa viniścaya karagata no hākiyi....."

"mesē sitā āgē sita niścala karagattāya. namut anit mohotēdi ā āsa hāra balūviṭa ē upadavā gat niścalatāvaya aturudahan viya."

"ē soru samaga katākarana kala Mina ē tarunayāge līlāva balā siṭiyāya. ohu tējas sahitavū balaparākramaya āti senāpatiyek men nirbhīta bhāvaya pennuvēya. ohugē dilisena āsvala minisun yaṭahat karana balaya pihiṭa tibena bava āṭa penuni. ohugē vacanada stiravū, pāhadilivu haṇḍakin kiyana ladī. ē āsū soru vevlamin tātiganimin īṭa yatahat pilituru dun ekada āṭa pudumayak noviya."(1.)

(' Although he was excited by the moonlight and the breeze on the river he sought nothing but to protect me. That proves his good character and his respect for me. His words and face show the strong love he fosters for me. During the past few days I have witnessed his courage and diligence. So it seems he is worthy of my love. But in my mind a feeling of love, unspeakably strong, has sprung up about this other youth. Firstly, when I heard of him from the old man, I was pleased about his bravery and tenderness. Secondly I began to like him when I saw him. I am unable to discern whether it is a permanent feeling or a transient one that will disappear like a water-bubble.....')

('Contemplating like this she ^{made her mind tranquil} calmly made up her mind. But when she opened her eyes, the next moment, that calmness in mind was gone.')

'While the youth was talking to the thieves Mina watched him. He was as brave as a glorious and gallant warrior. He spoke in a firm, clear voice. It was not surprising to see the thieves, hearing his words, answering him in a frightened and miserable tone.')

Simon Silva's style is characterised by frequent use of effective imagery. Although imagery is predominant in classical prose it has also become a popular aspect of modern prose, as it is in all literature. But a difference may be found in the treatment of imagery in ancient and modern literature. The former uses it as a mere embellishment, the latter to portray character most effectively. Here is one example, from Mina, of using imagery to depict mental confusion:

" svalpa vēlāvak yanaturu āgē sita kunāṭu gat muhudak

" menviya. situvili ekinekaṭa paṭalāvi ralaman ākula
 vyākula viya. bohōdurasita nikmennāvu haṇḍak āṭa
 āsennāk men viya. eya vātaya piṭin ā desāṭa gaman-
 karannākamen vī kramayen vaḍa vaḍā āsennaṭaviya. āgē
 sita prītiyenda sanvēgayenda gāhenta viya. mihirivū
 sāntavū nidrāva āṭa svamīpa vūvākmen ē sukha vēdanāvehi
 gālī sangnā virahita vūvāya."(1.)

('For a moment her mind was like a sea in a strong gale. Her disorganised thoughts became more and more confused like the waves in the sea. She began to hear a noise coming from afar. It grew louder and louder and travelled in the air towards her. Her mind was trembling with happiness and sorrow simultaneously. She fell into sudden unconsciousness immersing herself in that feeling of joy as if sweet, tranquil sleep had reached her.')

The image here is the sea in violent gale. The girl's mind which was in a state of extreme confusion is symbolically presented through this image. In the story, on this occasion, Mina has just indicated her love to the second youth and is naturally excited and happy to see him responding. The first youth, Danny, begins to ignore Mina which causes her great pain. She wanted to reveal her secret love that she had been nurturing for some time for the second youth, Pavulis. This is a most critical, decisive and tense moment for the girl. The weight of her confused feelings is unbearable to her; and that state of mind is reflected in the imagery of the entwined waves and that of the noise coming from afar.

The forest in the story is sometimes used not only as a mere forest, but as a symbol:

" strīn kerehi āsāven siṭina anit tarunayō kopamana
mōḍada kiyā mama sita sitā siṭiyā noveda? numut dān
mē durvalavū, namut nirmalavū, sansunvū mā magē
kalpanā siyalla venaskalā noveda? vanaya hā prītiya
upadavana stānayaḥ maṭa tavat tibunāda? numut dān mā
ehi giyāma siyalla hisva, aṇḍuruva, ghanava, ākulava
tibē."(1.)

('Wasn't there a time when I used to think those other youths who were in love with women were fools? But now hasn't this girl, who is weak but pure and calm, been able to remove all those ideas from my mind? Was there any other place as pleasant as the forest for me? But now when I retire into it everything, seems void, dark thick and confused.')

Pavulis had been living in the forest for some time. His former experiences had taught him to be indifferent to love. He tried not to be moved by the subtle signs of love from Mina. The girl, however, succeeds in changing his attitudes. This happens in the town where they take Danny after he was injured. Pavulis comes back to his jungle seclusion to pacify his mind and to regain his control of mind. Now, as is seen in the passage above, he fails to find that peace and pacifying power in the jungle. Here we see the novelist comparing the forest with the mind of the youth. First it was peaceful,

(1.) Mina. p.90.

pleasant and bright. Now after the intervention of the girl it is void, dark and thick. Thus unlike the other novelists of the early period who sent their characters to the forest in order to involve miracles, adventure etc., Simon Silva treats it with symbolic significance. (I have underlined the relevant phrases.)

Simon Silva's style is marked by its paucity of dialogues. He created dramatic situations in narrative but is not very fond of using the dialogue form. The few instances of dialogues in *Mina* are remarkable in that he followed the advanced method of it rather than that followed by some of his contemporaries i.e. placing the name of each speaker before his words. Silva presents the dialogue without giving the names of the speakers, assuming that the reader can easily recognize as he follows the story:

" magē māniyō nāhā namut piyā jīvatva siṭī. ohugē
sāarakamin tamayi mama mēvāṭa vāṭunē. 'ehema sāra
penvalāt lamayā maṭṭukarakganṭa bārivunakoṭa ṭikak
burulkama pennuvānam kohomaṭa ādda? lamayāge piyā
sūdukelinavāda?'

'nāhā'

'sorakam karanavāda?'

'nāhā'

'borukiyanavāda?'

'nāhā'

'gedara dora gāna nosoyā nobalā innavāda? koṭinma
kisividiyaka naraka ādruśayak pennanavāda?'

'nāhā' "(1.)

(" 'My mother is dead, but my father is living. It is because of his strictness that I have fallen into these (vices).'

'If he failed to put you on the right road even by being so strict what might have happened if he had been less strict? Is your father a gambler?'

'No'

'Does he steal?'

'No'

'Does he tell lies?'

'No'

'Is he careless about household matters? Is he a bad example to you in any way?'

'No')

This and the few other dialogues in *Mina* are lively and straightforward; redolent of natural idiom. A term like 'jiva-tva siti' is a rare instance of mixing literary language in the natural dialogue.

Thus we can see that Simon Silva has employed a suitable, rich and flexible style in this story. At that early stage of the Sinhalese novel he developed his own independent style while creating a few characters of depth and human interest. As we observed before *Mina* is a unique work but we cannot class it as a great novel. Simon Silva set an example by showing that the language was rich enough even at that time for writing good novels. The many writers that immediately followed him were not quite talented enough to develop this style, as we shall see in the following discussion.

Minor popular novelists of the early period.

The early decades of the twentieth century saw the appearance of a large number of Sinhalese novelists. These novelists of the early period may be classified into two groups; the major popular novelists and the minor popular novelists. Among the many minor novelists of this period only the works of a few important writers and their language is discussed here prior to a longer discussion on the works and language of the major novelists.

M.C.F. Perera, one of the most popular minor novelists of the early period published his first novel Mage Karume (My Fate) in 1906. This novel does not seem to have been as successful and influential as the first novel of Piyadasa Sirisena, i.e. Jayatissa and Rosalind which was published in the same year. The reasons for the success of the novels of Piyadasa Sirisena will be discussed later in this chapter. Other works of Perera are as follows: Magē Pembari (My Sweetheart) (1907), Lankā Abhirahas (Lanka Mysteries) (1907), Sirimādura (A name of a house) (1908), Ālayē Līlaya Hevat Malavun Jīvatvima (The Reality of Love or the Dead Come to Life) (1908), Vināsavū Navkāva (The Wrecked Ship) (1910) and Lalitā Hevat Ratna Mānikyaya (Lalita or the Precious Stone) (1911).

Alexander Valivita, another popular novelist of his time wrote four novels which are not very different from those of Perera. His works are as follows: Horunge Guhava (The Cave of the thieves) (1913), Lilīge Ādara Hasuna (Lily's Love Letter)

(1914) Taruniyak Soyāyāma (In Search of a Girl) (1927) and Sinhala Lansi Vivāhaya (The Sinhalese-Burgher Marriage) (1927). Among other minor popular novelists of the twenties Hemapala Munidasa, P.D.Liyanage and A.T.C. Jinadasa are noteworthy. Although Munidasa is regarded as a versatile writer and a great stylist in Sinhalese he has not been successful as a novelist. There are three novels to his credit: Prasada Sinha (A name) (1924) Vayala Hevat Bihisunu Ranabima (Viola or the Fierce Battlefield) (1925) and Malavun Atara Jivitaya (Life among the Dead) (1934).

P.D.Liyanage was popular as a novelist despite the imitative and abundant commonplace sayings in his stories. According to Saratchandra Liyanage's works cannot be classified as novels as they are full of digressive sayings and author's interferences.(1.) But in his time he has enjoyed considerable popularity. His novels are as follows: Nalaṅgana (The Actress) (1929), Vismita Lalitā (Lalita the Amazing) (1933), Maṅgul Perahara (The Wedding Procession) (1934), Nālikera Divya Vimanaya (The Nalikera Abode of Gods) (1934), Nāga Manavikāva (The Cobra Maiden) (1934), Sīnaya (The Dream) (1936), Vesmuhuna (The Mask) (1939) and Sohonehi Vivāhaya (The Wedding in the Cemetery) (1939).

A.T.C. Jinadasa based his stories on contemporary society which gained great popularity. He concentrated more on entertaining the reader than preaching and thus avoided having his

(1.) Saratchandra, E.R. Sinhala Navakata Itihasaya ha Vicaraya. p.114.

stories marred by lengthy social or religious criticisms. Some of his novels which were read until recent times are as follows: Baddha Vairaya hevat Nanda saha Leli (The Hatred or the Mother-in-Law and the Daughter-in-Law) (1923) Jayaratna Hevat Nirbhita Baladaksaya (Jayaratna or the Brave Boy Scout) (1925) and Tilaka Hevat Nirbhita Taruniya (Tilaka or the Brave Girl) (1930).

One of the most prolific novelists in the early period is N.G.A. Vimalanatha who drew plots from history and religion to write popular love stories. It may be useful to discuss at length the works of M.C.F. Perera and Vimalanatha who can be regarded as representative of the minor popular novelists of the early period.

M.C.F. Perera (1879-1922) dealt with the vices of Colombo upper class society and corruption of traditional values as a result of western culture. This was the pet theme of many novelists at that time. Perera wrote entertaining novels: They are not tedious for the reader. He must have followed the 'popular' English novel because we do not find serious treatment of subject-matter or character in his novels. His characters are either good or bad but not of complicated nature like real human beings. However, not only the minor novelists of this period but also the major ones portrayed this type of flat character. This story in Lanka Abhirahas will give us an idea of the kind of novels Perera produced. This is centred on the theme of destruction of those who

attempt to destroy good people in order to achieve their evil goals. The plot centres around the family of Sama Rendarala and his associates. Rendarala was a common character in the early twentieth century Ceylon. His trade is brewing and selling of liquor. Like many other 'Rendaralas' he is very rich. He associates with people who would help him in his misdeeds, to collect wealth in various unjust ways. His son Charlie follows the vices of his father while the daughter Salmina grows up as a symbol of good behaviour and wisdom. Jayasena who is the son of a friend of this family, lives with them. Now our attention is drawn to Rosy, a pretty girl but promiscuous, with whom Charlie falls in love. Rosy was already engaged to Vincent Fernando. Charlie is enticed by Rosy's beauty as well as her cunning attitudes and gives her valuable gifts and builds a fine house for her. After this event, murder and conspiracy occur. In a quarrel between the rivals, Charlie and Vincent, Rosy's father was stabbed to death. Charlie is the suspect but he is found not guilty and Vincent was discovered to be the murderer. Now another character, Silva, a lawyer, comes on to the scene; he wishes to marry Salmina, Charlie's sister. By this time Jayasena with whom Salmina is in love is also a lawyer. Her parents decide to give her in marriage to Jayasena. Silva gets together with Charlie, promises to help him marry Rosy and asks him to help him marry Salmina. They conspire against Jayasena and bring false charges against him for killing one of his servants.

This too does not work and they themselves are found guilty. After the happy marriage of Jayasena and Saimina our attention is again drawn towards Rosy who faces many miserable experiences due to her pleasure-seeking character and craving for fashionable society.

In this novel Perera does not criticise certain social institutions of his time like the middle classes, government officials, lawyers etc., directly, but this is accomplished in the way the story is built up. Unlike his contemporary novelists he does not intervene in the flow of the story with digressive comments. But Perera was not a fine craftsman. Unnatural incidents like Charlie building a house for Rosy, Rosy's character, the episode of Gunasekara's suffering and recovery from smallpox and the general connexion of the subplot to the main one can be considered as examples of weak craftsmanship. Like his other works this too embodies an interesting picture of the Sinhalese society of the early twentieth century. In his novel 'Lalita or the Jewel' (1911) Perera takes up the same subject; the life of newly prospering middle class society. Here, despite the short structure of the work, Perera deals with the problems of three families; Lontu Ralahami and his family, Vaidyasekara and his family and that of Bastian Silva. A large number of characters are involved. The heroine, Lalita, appears only in the middle of the story. The plot is centred not only on the life of Lalita but also around a precious stone which was first found by Lontu Ralahami

and which caused a number of murders subsequently. From time to time author criticises the bad consequences of being converted to Christianity and of the imitation of Western culture. Those who decline are the ones who indulge in extravagance to join fashionable society. In this respect Perera resembles Piyadasa Sirisena to a large extent. Perera's novels can be taken as the earliest examples of Sinhalese thrillers and crime stories. The world he created is not too realistic or too fictitious. Compared with the novels of many other novelists of the time we may find, perhaps, that Perera's works include the least number of incredible elements. This is more clearly seen in a novel like *Sirimadura*. (1908).

Sirimadura is the name of the fashionable new house built by Jayavira who acquires great wealth in a short period of time. He is helped by Lizzy, his wise, sensible wife and Ratnavira, a resourceful young man. Like most other wealthy Sinhalese businessmen of the early twentieth century (as they are depicted in the novels of that time) Jayavira is also too much interested in western culture and longs to join the high society. Lizzy tries to remind him of the importance of their own national culture and she brings up her daughter Mera according to traditional Sinhalese customs. After some time Ratnavira and Mera fall in love with each other and easily win the parents' consent for their marriage. Then Ratnavira's father dies from a sickness caused by alcohol and soon after that Mera's mother dies. After the death of his wife Jayavira faces

a number of losses in business and falls ill. Ratnavira, Mera's fiance, forgets his love for her after meeting Virginia, the fashionable daughter of London Perera. After the death of Jayavira, Mera is left alone as Ratnavira has broken with her. But while he was enjoying the lovely company of Virginia, Ratnavira too faces a lot of financial troubles and his new girl friend lets him down and marries a rich lawyer. After losing all his business and his love Ratnavira lives as a poor man with his mother. In the meantime Mera finds a jewel which had been given to her hidden in a small casket by her mother, sells it and buys her family house Sirimadura at the auction sale. Although Ratnavira was unfaithful to her she was not like him and goes to see him when he was ill and badly in need of help. He begs her to forgive him and later starts business with Mera's help and marries her.

The story as well as the ideas the author expresses through the characters in this novel are similar to those of Piyadasa Sirisena, the chief difference being that M.C.F. Perera does not include long discussions and debates on religion. His characters are generally either bad or good, though he depicts the complicated nature of the human mind to some extent in Ratnavira's character. The whole story is designed to show the consequences of forgetting good aspects of national culture and of foolish imitation of western civilization.

When we examine Perera's language we can see an attempt of developing a popular style which also represents the style

of the popular Sinhalese novel in early decades of this century.

He tends not to be pedantic. Among his works considered above, Sirimadura can be taken as a representative novel of his style. The depiction of character seems much better than in his other works and the style shows the author's concern about developing the language. Lizzy's character reflects a deep understanding of human nature. In his other works too Perera attempted to create characters of wise, farseeing and dignified women. From the beginning of the story Lizzy's personality attracts the attention of the reader:

"Silvāgē kīṃ bohōduraṭa sabbā bava Jayavīraṭa vaṭahunēya. namut ē gāna kisivak nokiyā hetema bimabalāgena siṭṭiyēya. mevēlehi Jayavīragē bhāryāva vū Lisi kāmārayē siṭṭa eliyaṭa āvāya. Jayavira āyadesa bāluyēya. ā mihiri haṇḍin katākaramin, . Silva . unnāhēgē katāva mama asā siṭṭiyemi. tamusēgē ē kīṃ tamuse gāna kalpanā kalāma hari. namut apagāna esē kalpanākalā ayutuyi. apē iḍam kābālla apā kī ganana vaṭitat novaṭitat mepamana dura katākiriṃa tamusēṭa vuvamanā nāta. ema iḍama tamuselā ganṭa utsaha karannē ehi miniran ātivāyin venṭa ōnā. ē laṅga pihiti anit iḍamvala tibēnam mē iḍamē nātivāṇṭa kāranaya kumakda?" (1.)

('Jayavira thought Silva's ideas were true. But he kept quiet and remained looking down. At this moment Jayavira's wife Lizzy came out of the room, Jayavira looked at her,

(1.) Perera, M.C.F. Sirimadura. Colombo.1908. p.8

'and she said in a sweet voice, 'I happened to hear what Mr. Silva said. Those sayings of yours may be true as far as they concern you. But it is very bad of you to think the same about us. Whether the price we ask for our land is reasonable or not you need not talk so much about it. It is because that there may be graphite on the land that you try so much to buy it. If graphite is found on the nearby lands is there any reason to doubt that there is graphite on this land?')

In this situation Jayavira, the husband, was going to believe the words of crafty Silva but Lizzy comes forward and prevents it. Her words are straightforward and suit her diligent personality. Sometimes Perera fails to maintain this lively style throughout the work. Consider how he tends to write a mawkish and modified language in the following instance:

"Lisi ebasata uttara demin, Fransis, kisikalekat dhanaya ativū taramata hetema gnānavantayek noveyi. śāstra ugat tānattēma gnānavanta veyi. pūrvayehi karanalada kisiyam kusala balayakin dhanaya atpat vūvāta ē tānattē śāstra nodannēnam agnānayeki, dhanahīnavīmut śāstra gnāna āti-tanattēma siyalukalhi bābālayi. ugatunge madhyayehi agnāna dhanavatā sinha samūhayak madhayayehi vū kānahil māllek meniye kīvaya."(1.)

('Francis, a man is not wise only on account of having wealth,' Lissy answered him. 'The man who has gained learning is wise. One may become rich because of the merits gained in a previous birth; yet one will be

'ignorant if one has not learned. He who is learned will prosper forever even if he is not rich. The ignorant wealthy person in the society of the wise is an old jackal amongst lions.')

This is not the kind of speech expected from a wife; even the elite do not speak this 'mixed Sinhalese' in actual life. Perera must have used this style as a result of being caught in the trend of his day. As we saw before his general style is not as Sanskritised as this.

Sporadic use of verses is another characteristic in the style of the early novelists. Some novelists like Vimalanatha and Piyadasa Sirisena were very fond of 'decorating' their works with verses. This may be attributed to two reasons; the general tendency among the Sinhalese readers at that time to read sensational poems and the influence from early English novels, such as those of Thomas Hardy.

M.C.F. Perera was not as fond of creating 'love scenes' in his novels as W.A. Silva or Vimalanatha. In the few such instances in Perera's works we find him employing a poetic style as seen in the following excerpt:

" mevēlehi Vinsant Ratnasuriya da pramudita citta santāna
 ättē Mera vālaṇḍagena āgē muhuna nāmati rōsamala itā
 sansun lesa cumbanaya kaleya. itā nirmalava manāva pi-
 pīgiya rosamalak nelā ehi malpeti tāleta yana bhītiyen
 itā semin semin simbinnaku men Vinsant Ratnasuriya da
 tamāge muhuna vādīmen Merāgē muhunaṭa vedanāvedo yana
 bhītiyen dō ita siyum lesa nāvata nāvatat simbēya."(1.)

('Then Vincent Ratnasuriya, being extremely pleased, embraded Mera and most gently kissed her face which was like a rose. Like some one who gently smells the petals of a rose that he has plucked, in such a way as would not hurt them, Ratnasuriya too, as if he was afraid of hurting Mera's face by touching it with his face, kissed it very softly again and again.')

The depiction of scenes of romance is expectable in this type of novels. What seems to be unnatural is the language in which it is done. The passage above does not include direct speech of the relevant characters; therefore the author is free to choose the style. He exploits the stereotyped ornate language which was avidly used by his contemporaries.

This particular style carries the reader to a dreamworld. The Victorian morals and ideas prevailing in the middle classes in Ceylon at that time were one of the main causes for these novelists to refrain from writing realistically or speaking openly about love. Even in such a pure utilitarian literature as the classical Sinhalese, the writers were not bound to use indirect language when they had to refer to love. There are instances in the classical Sinhalese literature of speaking more openly about love, sex and erotic sentiments than the Sinhalese novelists of the early period. In the following discussion on the novels of Vimalanatha we will see that he included incidents of love quite often in his novels, but mostly under the cover of flowery language.

N.G.A. Vimalanatha, as we saw before, was one of the most prolific novelists in the early period. Except for the novels

'Sisiliyage Panivudaya' (The Message of Sisiliya) (1929), 'Sisiliyage Vivahaya' (The Marriage of Sisiliya) (1929) and 'Sumanage Puduma Galavima nohot Maraka Diyamantiya' (The Surprising escape of Sumana or the Fatal Diamond) all his other works are based on plots from history or religion. In the three novels mentioned above he deals with modern society, especially that of Colombo. The popular, 'minor' writers of the period were not concerned with serious depiction of the problems of the society they were writing about, nor did they attempt to draw individual characters. Their characters are always 'types'; either heroes or villains. What they really wanted to attain by these stories was the wishfulfilment of the reader who longed to read romances of violence, mystery and wonder.

Vimalanatha's historical and religious works too have the same purpose. In the novel 'Posita Premaya nohot Anuragaye Rahasa' (The cherished love or the secret of passion) (1930), the author makes use of 'Katṭhahāri Jataka' and in 'Komalapani hevat Snehaye Ulpata' (The girl with a soft hand or the source of love) (1932) the 'Mudupani Jataka' is used as the plot. These two novels he published under the heading 'Ananda Katha' (Pleasurable Stories). In the series of stories called 'Sadhu Katha' (Good or Exemplary Stories) he based his novels on Ceylon history. In the first of these novels, 'Vanapuspayaya hevat Asokamala', he employs the story of the outcast girl 'Asokamala' with whom prince Saliya, the son of the famous king, Dutthagamini, fell in love and for whom he gave up his throne. In

the second of the Sadhukatha series Vimalanatha re-tells the history of the 'Tooth Relic' of the Buddha and the love story of Princess Hemamala and Prince Danta who brought it to Ceylon: this novel is named 'Maya Sopnaya nohot Hemamala' (The Mysterious Dream or Hemamala) (1929). In this work Vimalanatha follows not only the historical chronicles but also the Pali poem Dathavansa. Another famous historical figure in the history of Ceylon, the Queen Soma, is made the heroine in 'Pativrataya hevat Soma' (Chastity or Soma) (1931). The most infamous female character in Ceylon's history, the queen Anula, is the heroine in 'Anuratiya nohot Anula' (The Passion or Anula) (1931). In 'Mangala Yatrava nohot Sagarika' (The Wedding Boat or Sagarika) (1930) another legendary female figure, Princess Ratnavali, becomes the heroine. Here the novelist follows the classical Sanskrit play, Ratnavali.

This account of Vimalanatha's novels helps us to see that he too catered for the common reader who only expected a story full of sentimental elements. Perhaps more than any other fiction-writer of his day Vimalanatha utilized every possible occasion to include 'love scenes' and to express his ideas about love.

When we look at his works based on modern society we find him writing in a language similar to the narrative styles of Piyadasa Sirisena and W.A. Silva. (See below). In the following passages where he expresses his ideas about love we can observe his style being similar to that in the passage we discussed

from M.C.F. Perera:

" Sukumāravū yuvatīyakage ālaya siyalukalhima niścalavu
sāpataki. tama yahangeṭa nātnam kusum uyanāṭa vāda
svakīya pemvatā gāna sitamin uḍaṭa gena pahala helana
susum vālak gāna sitana yusmatāṭa āgē ahinsaka
hadapatle dilisena amaraṇīya ālokaya pāhadilivannēya."(1)

('The passion of a pretty maiden is an eternal pleasure.
If you think of a girl who thinks of her sweetheart,
in her bedroom or in a lovely park, and sighs, then
you can perceive the eternal light that shines at the
bottom of her heart.)

" svakīya yovun viyehidi tama anāgataya udesā yam taru-
nayaku veta ālaya nokarana yuvatīyak vannida? hita-
vata! o tomō suvaṇḍa nāti kusumayak menāyi mama kiyami,
mebaṇḍu tarunayan hā taruniyan mē prēmālōkayaṭa paha-
lavū minis rūkaḍayayi kiva yutuya. tamāgē anāgataya
sambandha iranama soyādīma mavpiyādi vāḍihiṭiyanta
bārakarana yuvatīyage ho tarunayāgē jīvitaya gāna
api maṇḍak sitamu. ālaya nāmati amaraṇīya gunayak ovun
tula avidyamānaya." (2.)

('Is the existence of a maiden, who would not love a
young man in her youth for her future partner, possible?
Friend! I say that such a girl is like a flower of no
fragrance. Young girls and boys of this nature must
be taken as nothing but puppets in this world of love.
Let us think for a while of the life of maidens and
youths who look upon their parents to find their fate
for them. The eternal virtue of love is nonexistent
in them.')

(1.) Vimalanatha, N.G. A. Mangala Yatrava. Colombo.1930.p.1.

(2.) Vimalanatha, N.G. A. Komalapani hevat snehaye ulpata
Colombo.1932.p.29.

Vimalanatha expressed these sentimental ideas about love in a language so emotive that it pleases the adolescent reader. This could be, perhaps, the influence of western romanticism. Vimalanatha is preoccupied with the intention of presenting some narrow ideas about love again and again, using such emotive words as 'yuvatiya', 'yovunviya', 'anuragaya', 'snehaya', 'adbhuta vasikruta gunaya', 'sura sapa', 'pembariya', 'kamaniya muvapiyuma', 'yovun rasayehi abhiseka vanna', etc. He maintains that love is the greatest thing for a girl. As seen in the above passage he talked of an 'eternal love', which is a typical conception of romantic poets, and which existed among Sinhalese poets as late as the 1950s. This is a 'world of love' it is full of passion, in the eyes of Vimalanatha. Consider how passionately he sentimentalizes the 'power of a kiss': 'O, what is this? The kiss dwells in association with love and is of great power. The kiss is so powerful that it can bring one for a moment to the comforts of heaven or to the sufferings of hell. This shows the power of passion. Either to a man or to a woman who is excited with sexual desire it is the kiss which brings the first pleasure. And this also is related to love. To offer a kiss to her sweet-heart is the greatest pleasure to a girl, and so is it to a boy..!(1)

Vimalanatha creates a romantic world where life, love

(1.) Vimlanatha, N.G.A. Komalapani hevat Snehaye Ulpata.

Colombo. 1932. p.8

and passion are considered as mysterious and superhuman. He says 'the whole history of a woman's life is her love.' There have been a number of popular novelists who were influenced by these ideas. A major popular novelist like W.A. Silva too has expressed ideas similar to these in some of his works. In Sinhalese society writing about love in laudatory language like this is a great risk for a novelist. But this writer seems to have been concerned only about young readers.

He would not have otherwise written about love letters, etc., as follows:

"nidahasa sīmāvu mrudu kāmīniyakage prēmāyē alut ārañci āṭa atisayin durlabhaya, ā svakīya hada patle saṅga-vāgena tibena purudu pravruttiṇ samagama nirantarayenma sangamaya karamin eyin yali yalit tama premaya alut vāḍiyā karaganniya. eheyin mebaṇḍu yuvatiyakāṭa tama pemvatāgen atpat vana ādara hasunakāṭa vaḍā utkrusṭa vastuvak nāṭa." (1.)

('For a gentle, passionate girl, who has but a limited freedom, rare is the news of her beloved. She has to have recourse to the old memories that she preserves at the bottom of her heart, to revive her love. Therefore, for a maiden of this sort, there can be nothing more precious than a love letter from her beloved.')

Such ideas are some times found in some English novelists such as Thomas Hardy. We can compare the following passage

(1.) Vimalanatha, N.G.A. Mayasopnaya hevat Hemamala. Colombo, 1929. p.29.

with the above example from Vimalanatha.

" Dear little letter; she huddled it up. So much more important a love-letter seems to a girl than to a man. Springrove was unconsciously clever in his letters..."(1)

The apparent influence of the popular English novelists, as well as the fact that Vimalanatha himself was a popular poet of the time, must have caused him to employ an emotive vocabulary. Almost all his books are interspersed with verses expressing sentimental ideas about love. It is only in the few works with modern plots that he has shown a certain amount of interest in faithful delineation of character and uses a less sentimental style.

Vimalanatha often uses ordinary spoken language. Consider the attempt to grasp the natural speech in the following dialogue:

" Kavda nānde ara ā mahatmayāyi āsiya. nāndā lēliṭa vaḍā parasit aṇḍunanniyak vūvāya. ā Sisiliyā desaṭa hoṇḍaṭama yomuvemin 'mokada Sisiliyā ēka nikan eka vidiyakin āhāvvē? unnāhe kavda kiyala aṇḍunanavada?' ' ovu nānde', 'kavuda?' 'Samarasinha valavven ā kenek', 'itin mokoṭada āve?', 'ā karanāva nāndā dannavā novā', mama mokoṭada kiyanne', 'nāhā mama danne nāhā, mokoṭada kiyāpan', 'hā ehenam ēka kiyanta bāhā, ēka rahasak' kiyamin sisiliyā elisabetge muhunaṭa gāmburu bālmak heluvāya'"(2.)

('Aunt, who is that gentleman who visited you? she asked.

(1.) Hardy, Thomas. Desperate Remedies. London. ed.1960.p.64

(2.) Vimalanatha. N.G.A. Sisiliyage Panivudaya. Colombo.1929 p.28

'Now, the aunt was better in reading others' minds than the daughter-in-law. So turning very closely towards Sisiliya, she said, 'Why did you ask that in such a strange way, Sisiliya? Do you know who he was?' 'Yes aunt', 'Who' 'Somebody from Samaringha Valavva', 'Why did he come?' 'Don't you know aunt why he came?' 'No I don't know, you tell me why', 'O! is that so, then I can't tell you, it is a secret'. Saying thus Sisiliya looked deep into Elizabeth's face.')

Sisiliya is the heroine of the story. She is brave and wise in addition to being attractive and virtuous. Her aunt, Elizabeth, connives to betray Sisiliya in order to achieve her own aim, which is to get married to a rich nobelman. This conversation occurs just after the intermediary who came to discuss the terms of the 'deal' with Elizabeth, had left. Sisiliya smelled that something extraordinary was in the air. Her straightforward questions reflect her suspicions and are indicative of her character. In the following example we can see how Vimalanatha makes us listen to a quarrel between Sisiliya and her younger sister, the latter being extremely impudent and playful; again the speech is entirely natural:

" mokada yakō uṁba maṭa sāra dāṇne? uṁba sellam baḍuvak noveyi. katā peṭṭiyak vageyi, gramafon ekak-Samarasinha valavvaṭa yanne uṁbe manamālaya balanṭayi. -ehema giyāma oya asanīpa okkoma maga āreyi. uṁbada īye rā nidimāruveyi asanavāt samagama kōpayāṭa pat Sisiliyā, 'pala bālli yanna' kiyamin cālaṭṭa paharak gāsīma pinisa idiriyāṭa yomuvēnavat ekkama ā taruniyage paharaṭa asunovi duva-genagos sisiliyāge aprasanna bāvu elisabeth veta pāvasuvāya." (1.)

(' How dare you threaten me? Do you think you are a doll, no, you are like a chatter-box, like a gramophone; you have to go to Samarasinghe Valvavva to see your bridegroom. All your sickness will disappear when you go there. Did you not sleep last night?' When she was asking questions like this Sisiliya lost her temper and moved forward to give a blow to Charlotte saying 'Off with you, bitch'. But the latter, avoiding the blow, ran upto Elizabeth and told her about Sisiliya's displeasure.')

In the following examples too we can find Vimalanatha trying to use the natural idiom of the speakers. This is the idiom of the young people of towns; they mix English words as much as possible with Sinhalese words.

- (i) "'mama lansi kellak ekka katākaramin siṭiye nāhā. magē mitra Vilmat unnāheyi mamayi paak ekaṭa giyavelēdi unnāhēge siṣṭarut āvit hiṭiya.'
- (ii) 'eheyin laṅgadi pavatvana sīniyar lokal vibhāgayāṭa yana adahasā tibe,....mehi issaraṭa vada boḍaslat bohoma vāḍiyi.'
- (iii) 'daalinge bradar kō?'
 'māc ekakeṭeyi kiyā kāmbal paak giyā.'
 'maṭa samba unē nāha. mama daalinṭa tāgi baḍuvak gēnṭa peṭṭā giyā.'
 'diyar, bōḍin maastar ekka āngri unāya kiyala bradar kīva, ē sābāda?'
 'ovu mama daalinge gedaraṭa enavayi kiyā ū bohoma vāradi kivva. ē hinda mama vena bōḍin ekakaṭa yaṇṭa hitāgena innavā.'
 'ehenam diyar ape gedara navatinavanam amma bohoma kāmātiyi. apē lav ekaṭat bohoma hondayi. mamma pappa saha brādarut diyarta bohoma ādareyi. bradar hāma

'velāvema kiyanne diyarge ric eka gānayi.'"

- (i)('I was not talking with a Burgher girl. When I went to the park with my friend Wilmot, his sister was there too.'
- (ii) 'Therefore I hope to sit for the forthcoming Senior Local examination....., and also there are so many boarders here now.'
- (iii) 'Darling where is your brother?'
- 'He went to Campbell park for a match'
- 'I did not see him, I went to Pettah to buy a present for you darling'.
- 'Dear, My brother said that you are angry with the boarding-master, is that true?'
- 'Yes, he talked too much against me coming to see you, darling. Therefore I am thinking of changing my boarding place.'
- 'Oh! I would like it very much if you would board with us dear, it would be very good for our love, too. My mama, papa and brother like you very much, dear. My brother always speaks about your richness.'

This is the type of Sinhalese that school boys and girls, especially in towns even use today. Consider such words and terms as 'paak ekata'(to the park), 'sistarut'(the sister too), 'siniyar'lokal'(senior local), 'daalin' (darling), 'mac ekakata' (to a match), 'diyar'(dear), 'bodin maastar' (the boarding-master), 'angri'(angry), 'lav'(love) etc. which are so often used in the day to day speech of school children and a certain

- (1.) Vimalanatha, N.G.A. 'Taruniyakage Antima Kamatta' n.d.
Colombo. n.d.
- (i) p.8
- (ii) p.9
- (iii) p.12

type of Sinhalese speakers; but are not part of the general literary language. The dispute about using 'slang words' in novels was started by some novelists and critics at a much later time; and I shall take up the subject later in this study.

Not only dialogues, used appropriately with character and situation are found in Vimalanatha's novels but also aptly created locations. This 'location' of character in the novel sometimes is done through the description of background and atmosphere and at other times by mere description of the mental state of characters. This device of the novelist can be compared with film-director's technique of locating the actors in suitable landscapes and other surroundings. For this purpose the latter uses background scenes and many other visual effects while the former uses dialogue, description, manner and symbols. Some such locations in Vimalanatha's novels are interesting, though they are of a low standard compared with the later novelists. For instance, we can consider one of such locations in 'Sisiliyage Vivahaya' (Sisiliya's Marriage); here we see Sisiliya facing a problem. There is no favourable solution for her problem and she becomes frustrated and desperate. Her guardian forces her to marry a person whom she cannot love. At the climax of her anguish the author draws this picture:(I translate):

" She got out of bed with some difficulty. Then she wiped her soft cheeks and eyes which were wet with tears; and left the room. The 'Eliza Mansion' seemed like a

" frightful hell to her. Everything that her eyes caught sight of seemed to her like a foe. She rambled towards the kitchen; and it too appeared like hell in front of her. She came to the parlour again which turned out to be an even more painful place. She glanced at the glowing lamp in the lounge; and it seemed just like the 'yuganta' sun " (1.)

In the following instance from 'Sisiliyage Panivudaya' (The message of Sisiliya) a more clearly presented 'cinematic' location is found:

" In the middle of the room there was a broken table. There was an 'atulpota' full of rice flour of about four measures of rice on the table. A large bottle with some sugar in it was on the table. Two chairs, turned black with smoke, were by the table. In a corner of the room a bunch of bananas was hanging from the roof. A bundle of mats (paduru kottavana) was in another corner. In another corner there was a wooden moulder; which had been broken. Next to it were two wooden pestles. Under the bundle of mats there were two boxes. These could be the boxes in which the old woman kept her clothes, A fat cat was sleeping on a piece of sack on the box. At the sight of the old woman the cat jumped out of its seat, went up to her and brushing its head against her feet began to play. A few coconuts were lying about." (2)

This is a new and effective use of language, in description of locations. The figures of language used in the former

- (1.) Vimalanatha. N.G.A.Sisiliyage Vivahaya.Colombo.1929.p.179
 (2.) Sisiliyage Panivudaya. p.196

passage have some relation with the internal state of the character. In that passage he refers to hell twice, 'elisa madura ayata apayak men danuneya.' and 'eyada ayata penune nirayak menya'; which suits the utter painful state of the girl's mind. Everything she saw in her house at that time seemed to her like an enemy. These rhetorical expressions have been 'selected' with care for the purpose of lively characterization. In ancient Sanskrit literature and even in some Sinhalese classics we also find the atmosphere and background being described in relation to the current mental state of the characters. According to this tradition when the hero or heroine is happy everything seems pleasant, bright and joyful. When they are unhappy it is the opposite. Here Vimalanatha too follows the same method. It is because of this lack of originality that the author fails to gain the full effect of most of his descriptions. But the second passage above does not fall into this category. Considering the time in which Vimalanatha wrote it can be classed among the best 'locations' or effective descriptions in the early Sinhalese novel. The room presented here is that in which Sisiliya was being held by her kidnappers. Even today in a farmer's hut in the Central province of Ceylon a room would look like this. A writer like Vimalanatha, whose main preoccupation was sensational depiction of romantic love, does not frequently portray realistic pictures of surroundings or life like this. The simplicity and lucidity in the language in the above passage indicates that the language of nar-

narrative in the early period of the present century need not have been too weak for creating serious novels, and that it was partly due to lack of talent among the novelists that good novels were not written at that time.

PART II.

Major Novelists of the Early Period.

Piyadasa Sirisena.(1875-1946)

Piyadasa Sirisena published his first novel, Jayatissa and Rosalind in 1906. He had an immediate success among the Buddhist readers and became one of the most copious Sinhalese novelists. Although he employed the form of novel to propagate his religious and nationalistic ideas he was reluctant to regard his works as 'novels':

" There are many books written by me to show the right way to our Sinhalese people. Although the name 'novel' is used for them by some people, nothing except religious and instructive ideas can be found in my books!"(1)

" The books written by me are not mere meaningless stories. Although they are classified as novels, I have not written a single book which would not bring good ethical ideas into the mind of the reader."(2.)

What these words show us is that Sirisena did not like to

(1.) Sirisena,Piyadasa. Yantam Galavuna. Colombo.1934
from the foreword.

(2.) id. Sucaritadarasaya. Colombo.1926. From the foreword.

regard his works as novels, but as instructive tales which would bring good results for the reader. At the same time he implies that what is usually known as 'the novel' does not bring any fruitful results. In most of the forewords to his works, he has expressed his attitude towards the novel which was beginning to be established as a popular aspect of Sinhalese literature. In the introduction to the fifth edition of his first work 'Jayatissa and Rosalind' Sirisena admits that English novels have influenced him to some extent, 'However, it was by reading English fiction (novels) that we understood the importance of creating fiction'.(1.) Sirisena did not want to follow all the aspects, especially the literary aspects, of the modern novel because as he says, 'novels are mostly imaginary and pleasurable stories, but our narratives are based on incidents which have really happened and been experienced by me'.(2.)

Sirisena was well aware of the fact that he was writing exactly what the readers of that time expected from a writer of fiction. He was quite satisfied with the response of the readers. 'The story 'Jayatissa and Rosalind' written by me in 1904 has been reprinted four times so far; and that indicates how useful it has been to our people'. He thought that he popularized the Sinhalese novel, but was not quite satisfied with what other writers were producing. 'So many other gentlemen

-
- (1.) Sirisena, Piyadasa. Jayatissa saha Rosalin. Colombo. 1916
fifth edition. From the foreword.
(2.) id. Mahesvari. Colombo. 1936

after reading my book, have written stories whether they are useful or not to the country.'(1.) He believed that fiction was the best way to teach people, to prevent them from being converted to Christianity and foolishly imitating western civilisation. 'Jayatissa and Rosalind', the fiction written by me, was so useful to people that 13000 copies of it were sold..... Useful ideas which are taught through stories are better absorbed into the minds of the common people than those taught through other methods.' These ideas expressed repeatedly in Sirisena's works imply that he did not attempt to deviate from the tradition of Sinhalese literature. Sirisena and some other Sinhalese novelists of the early period wrote moral, instructive and didactic stories because of the influence from the tradition as well as under contemporary national and religious pressures.

The attitude of Sirisena towards the novel reflects the attitude of the reading public too. They must have thought the novel was only meant for reading as a pastime, did not bring any useful ideas and was only a waste of time. This is not a wrong or shallow concept if we think of only the popular sensational novel. It was only perhaps Walter Scott and some crime and mystery novels that the Sinhalese novelists of the early period must have read in English, and that is why they had such an impression of the novel. If they had been familiar

(1.) Sirisena, Piyadasa. Taruniyakage Premaya. Colombo 1947
(sixth edition) From the foreword.

with the novels of Charles Dickens and Jane Austen, or of Joseph Conrad & E.M. Forster etc., they would have learnt that the novel is a serious art form. Piyadasa Sirisena was extremely encouraged by the success of his first work and wrote many novels thereafter. After 'Jayatissa and Rosalind' which was published in 1906, 'Apaṭa Vecca Dē' (This is what happened to us) and 'Mahā Viyavula' (The Great Scandal) were published in 1909. Taruniyakagē Prēmaya (A Maiden's Love) was published in the following year. This novel as well as some of his later works like Adbhūta Āgantukayā (The Mysterious Visitor) (1924) and Yantam Gālavunā (A Narrow Escape) (1934) show that Sirisena selected very 'modern' names for his works despite the fact that he did not write modern novels. Dingirimenika (1918) is the first of a series of stories Sirisena wrote under the title 'the adventures of Kongoda Vikramapala'. These detective stories became very popular and Sirisena himself became the first successful detective story writer in Sinhalese. The hero in these stories, Vikramapala, is the embodiment of all the virtues that Sirisena intended to present through his writings.

It would be useful for our study to consider the plots of a few novels by Sirisena before analysing his narrative style. Although he has written about twenty novels we shall consider in brief the plots of Jayatissa and Rosalind, Mahaviyavula and Dingirimenika only, because these three works can be taken as representative. Sirisena calls his first novel

'The Happy Union or Jayatissa and Rosalind' which gives the reader the knowledge that he is going to read a story with a happy ending. Jayatissa and Rosalind when they meet at the beginning of the story are very young, Jayatissa being sixteen and Rosalind thirteen. Despite their age they behave as a mature boy and a girl. Unexpected rain causes the first meeting of the young lovers in the verandah of an empty house on their way back from school. A deep feeling of love is born in their minds at first sight. When Jayatissa asks Rosalind, 'My love, it seems that you are quite happy now, what is the reason for it? Have you not been as happy as this before?', she replies, although quite unnaturally, 'Sir, it is true that water-lilies bloom in the star-light only slightly. In the moonlight they bloom fully and reach the climax of happiness. Likewise, by seeing you, who are like the moon, my mind which is like a water-lily is delighted as it has never been before.' This language is 'embellished' with figures from the ancient poetry. As he was extremely obsessed with moral purposes Sirisena writes in elevated language, especially when he had to deal with love. Like all the other works of this author this one is also full of digressive debates, poems, lectures etc.

After their first meeting Jayatissa and Rosalind develop their relationship by writing to each other. It was only after some time that Jayatissa learns that Rosalind was a Roman Catholic. Then he tries to convert her parents to Buddhism.

Rosalind says that she would not have promised to marry him if she had known that he was a Buddhist. Then he writes to her asking various questions about religion; judging her by her replies he determines that it is possible to convert her. During their rare meetings as lovers they discuss and argue about religious matters. Following is a passage from such a discussion which is typical of Sirisena's novels:

" Rosalind: Our God doesn't have a body. (He is a spirit)
He is a pure soul.

Jayatissa: What is the soul?

Rosalind: Soul is wisdom.

Jayatissa: Does a child have a soul just after he is born? Does a puppy have a soul?

Rosalind: The child has a soul, and the puppy has a body.

Jyatissa: What is the difference between a puppy and a child? Can the small child know certain things like you and me and about God with the soul which you call wisdom?" (1.)

These arguments and discussions run over a few pages in the novel. As we mentioned above Sirisena wrote these stories for the purpose of protecting his ideal 'pure Sinhalese culture' from western impact. Therefore the young lovers are obliged in his novels to devote their time to discussing religion and culture. The male roles, especially the heroes like Jyatissa, should be able to argue with anyone to defend Buddhism and Sinhalese culture. These heroes, like the author himself, are fond of giving public speeches on these subjects.

(1.) Sirisena, Piyadasa. The Happy Union or Jayatissa and Rosalind. Colombo 1924. 5th edition.p.21.(*Author's words)

They are non-smokers and anti-liquor heroes. One day Rosalind's father attends one of the lectures given by Jayatissa on the subejct of 'Marriage'; which makes a great impression on him. When he learns from Rosalind that it was to that youth she wished to get married and not to Vincent Perera who had been proposed by him, he invites Jayatissa for a discussion at his house. This gives the author an opportunity to express most of his ideas about Christianity and Buddhism through the mouth of his hero, Jayatissa. He tells the life stories of the Christ and the Buddha; compares them; criticises Christian doctrine and praises Buddhism. At the end of this all-night discussion Rosalind's family become Buddhists. Vincent Perera hears that he is going to loose his love and with the help of his friend, who is a doctor, kidnaps Rosalind. Hereafter the scene changes from Colombo to a thick forest in the up-country. Vincent goes to the forest with Rosalind to hide from the police. In the forest the girl escapes and is helped by deities. The episode about Vincent going to catch a small deer for Rosalind has been taken from the story of Rama and Sita. One day in her wanderings in the jungle Rosalind comes to a mysterious cave where she encounters some 'pure' Sinhalese heroes who resemble some historical figures and are strict Buddhists. Meanwhile, Jayatissa who comes to the same forest to search for Rosalind meets with many adventures and visits some ruined cities. As is implied in the title of the story the lovers meet in the forest and come to Colombo to be 'hap-

pily united'. Through the adventures of the hero and heroine Sirisena informs the reader about the history of Ceylon and its geography. For instance, the small palm-leaf manuscript Rosalind found in a hermit's hut gives a brief story of the Sinhalese nation.

Mahaviyavula (the great scandal) is the third novel by Sirisena. In this novel, as in all other stories by him, Sirisena attempts to enlighten his readers about the greatness of the Sinhalese nation and Buddhism. He claims in the introduction that he hopes to teach political methods (desapalana kramayat) through this story, as such 'patriotic and useful' books were scarce at this time. In this story Sirisena draws characters from many spheres of Sinhalese society. First we read about the family of Gunasekara Muhandiram, especially the daughter Georgiana, who is extremely westernized, does not care about Sinhalese culture or Buddhism, goes out with five boys of whom she likes Jimmy best. This youth is a 'Lansiya' (a burgher) who knows western dancing and singing which are the qualities Georgiana admires. Nandavatie is the pretty maid servant of Georgiana. She is the complete opposite in character to Georgiana. Although Nandavatie is working now as an 'Ayah' she is the daughter of a 'true Sinhalese' family who despise western culture. Dhanapala Tennakoon, a rich youth from Kandy, had fallen in love with Nandavatie when he went to Georgiana's house at her parents' invitation. Tennakoon did not like Georgiana because he saw that she was

superficial, too fashionable and extravagant; instead he noticed the 'Ayah', and thought that she must come from a respectable family. Thereafter he writes a letter to Nandavatie to examine her character. She reveals to him that she was a daughter of a rich, respectable person in a certain village; but after his death her relations seized their property and she had to come to Colombo with her mother to earn a living. After making Nandavatie hopeful of getting married to him, Tennakoon goes to England for some time. In the meantime Georgiana is married to Cyril Vikramatilaka, with whom she is not happy, and therefore she arranges to meet her favourite friend Jimmy while they were still on honeymoon at Kandy. This leads to a great scandal as Cyril finds Jimmy sleeping with his wife and beats both of them. They are later charged with adultery. At the court Georgiana and Jimmy are found guilty and she is divorced from Cyril. Nandavatie, after earning some money, rents a small house and lives with her mother working as a seamstress.

A newly prosperous youth called John de Mel tries to marry Nandavatie. Another person called Virasingha also asks for her hand. All these youths desire her not only because of her physical attractiveness but also her good qualities. When he saw that Nandavatie did not like him and was determined to marry Tennakoon, John de Mel kidnaps her with the help of a friend called Timothy Dabare. Their plans go wrong because Timothy tries to possess Nandavatie for himself by giving his

mistress to de Mel. Behaving wisely and bravely, Nandavatie escapes from her kidnappers and is later found by Tennakoon and marries him.

In this story, while criticising the wealthy upper class in Colombo for their imitation of western culture and for forgetting Buddhism and Sinhalese traditions, Sirisena criticises the government for imposing an unsuitable administrative system on Ceylon. Through the life of Timothy he attacks some religious sects called 'anagarikas' and 'brahmacaris', who were becoming a social attraction in Sinhalese Buddhist society at that time. Tennakoon's visit to England gives Sirisena an opportunity to criticise the unbalanced economic system in England, which he does by comparing the 'East End' of London with luxury areas. Thus we see that in Sirisena's novels he had included as many subjects as possible which he thought would be useful to his readers. At the beginning of the story we find Muhandiram Gunasekara's family in full prosperity and Nandavatie and her mother in the worst conditions. Towards the end of the story the former family are ashamed, humiliated and declined and the latter are restored to their former respectable position. These two types of families or characters are often found in Sirisena's novels which causes a monotony in his plots. From the very beginning of the story the reader knows who is good and who is bad and also who is going to prosper and who is going to decline.

Dingirimenika (a name) is the first of the six detective

novels written by Sirisena. He calls these stories 'the adventures of Vikramapala'. So this novel is called the first adventure of Vikramapala. It is quite obvious that Sirisena, like some of the other writers we discussed in this chapter, got the idea of writing detective novels from the west. As in all the other novels of this author, in this work also we find a moral story. He did not write adventure and mystery stories just for the sake of arousing feelings of thrill and other sensations in the mind of the reader. Whatever the form of novel he used, his sole purpose was the improvement of the reader. His purpose, if we forget the artistic aspects, was quite genuine and plausible; because as he understood it, literature should serve a greater aim than mere entertainment. When we read his stories we see that he has generally attacked and criticised western culture and Christianity; but on closer observation we can find that he was not so narrow minded as to condemn western civilization completely.

There are some instances scattered in his novels where Sirisena 'teaches' his readers to follow only the good aspects of western culture. 'Although now we follow the dress and other customs of the English and other European peoples do we really know about their great heroes? No, we really don't know. What we know are the customs and habits of the mean rogues who are born among these European nations; yes, we know drinking, dancing with women embracing them, extravagance, flirting with young women etc., very well. But we don't know or imitate the

great virtues of the English people. For instance, the enormous English ship 'Titanic' was wrecked, recently, on its way to America. There were many noblemen and millionaires among the passengers. But they did not care about their own lives and allowed all the women and children get into the life boats. They did not let any coward get into those boats which were full of women and children. Like this, those good brave men drowned in the sea saving the women and children.'(1)

Sirisena made use of all the opportunities in his stories to express ideas similar to these. When we read these novels we find how much this author was concerned and worried about the declining condition in which his nation was at that time. Therefore he learned thoroughly the cultural and religious history of the Sinhalese and wrote a number of stories to illustrate his opinions.

In Dingirimenika, the detective, Vikramapala, narrates the story. First he introduces himself to the reader and implies that it was because of his determination to become a true Sinhalese hero and to serve his nation that he chose to become one who detects thieves, and not a thief, although according to his horoscope he was doomed to be one.(2.) The plot is about the mysterious disappearance of Dingirimenika, the

(1.) See Also. Sirisena, Piyadasa. Sri Lanka Mata .pp.123/24.

(2.) Sirisena, Piyadasa. Dingirimenaka or the First Adventure of Wickramapala. Colombo. 1925 (second edition) p.1.

pretty, virtuous young daughter of the rich, noble family of Mivitigala Valavva at Gampola. After Vickramapala takes the case into his hands, he wanders about all over the country looking for the girl; and in the meantime delivers talks on his favourite subjects to various Sinhalese people to make them understand their mistakes. Ranbanda, the hero, is in prison as he had been found guilty of Dingirimenika's disappearance. Vikramapala learns that Ranbanda and Dingirimanika are 'true Sinhalese and Buddhist' heroes. Because of the false values and vanity of the girl's parents they did not allow Ranbanda to marry Dingirimenika. On the eve of Dingirimenika's betrothal to Navaratna, the youth chosen by her parents, Ranbanda tried to run away with Dingirimenika.

Ranbanda's plans went wrong by some misfortune; instead of Dingirimenika he took Maggi, the maidservant, into his car. On the way he realized his mistake and left Maggi at a railway station and came back to Kandy. There he was arrested because Dingirimenika had disappeared that same night. Vikramapala learns from Maggi that Dingirimenika was taken away by a thief called Agoris Appu. Later he gathers more information from Ranbanda and finds Dingirimenika who had now been captured by another thief called Babasinno. After her misfortune, while living in a dangerous cave with thieves, Dingirimenika had taken a vow that she would not allow herself to be seduced by the thief; she promised him that she would marry him after ten months and before that she would not allow herself to be

touched by any man. She thought that if she was not saved before the deadline she had given to the thief, she would commit suicide. After some adventures (which are of course child's play to the modern reader) Vikramapala saves Dingirimenika with all the jewels and money she had taken with her. Thereafter he explains to the girl's parents the folly of their prejudice against lower castes and wins their consent for the marriage between Ranbanda and Dingirimenika.

Vikramapala, the detective who is more like a 'Bodhisatta' than a modern crime inspector, in this story and others too, is very clever in disguising himself as various people. In Dingirimenika when he goes to see Maggi he is a carpenter; when he goes to the cave of the thieves he is an old pilgrim, soon afterwards he is an old forest-keeper. Finally, he becomes the old uncle of the leader of the thieves. In other stories he is disguised as a woman or a Tamil or a Moslem peddler. These unbelievable disguises are one of the main drawbacks in these novels. As a result of the author's preoccupation with morality all the main characters become flat types, either good or bad. It is not only the customs borrowed from Europe that Sirisena criticises, he also attacks ruthlessly some traditional institutions such as caste discrimination in lay society as well as among Buddhist priests.

The narrative style of Sirisena is similar to that of Simon de Silva in general; but it lacks the freshness and life of the latter. The language of the many debates and documentary passages is the same as that of religious and literary

debates of the late nineteenth century. The poems which are found quite often in these novels remind us of the poems in Vimalanatha's novels. Some of these poems, for example, those found in the letters of Dingirimenika and Ranbanda and the moving poems written by them in their prisons, show that Sirisena was more skilled and talented as a poet than a prose writer. Occasionally in Sirisena's novels we find his characters speaking naturally. But mostly his characters speak the author's words and not their own. In a way this shows his disinterestedness in the modern craft of fiction. This is an example of the language Jayatissa uses in his debates:

" 'civilisation' yannehi tēruma-visiturubhāvaya, ālokaya, śrī sōbhāva, śrī samurddhiya yanādiyayi. śīlācārayanu 'Virtue, Virtuousness' varcu hevat varcuvasnas yanuyi. 'Civilization goes hand in hand with vice, 'sivilيسان eka yam raṭakaṭa yannē duṣcaritaya hā atinata alvāgenaya', meyin 'sivilيسان' silayat ācarā bhāvayat nova nāgarika visituru bhāvaya bava sitaṭa gata yutuyi."(1.)

('The meaning of the word 'civilization' is prosperity, brightness, glory, affluence etc. The word 'silacara' means virtue or virtuousness. 'Civilization goes hand in hand with vice.' This indicates that civilization is not virtue or virtuousness but only urban pomposity.')
p. 11, line 10

To justify his hero using this pedantic language, at the beginning, Sirisena says that he was well versed in ancient

languages such as Sanskrit and Pali and knew English to some extent. Even the lovers in these stories mostly use a literary style in their conversations:

" Benjamin: 'hoṇḍayi Sunandā nōna vāni avivāhaka taruniyak innā mebaṇḍu kuḍā geyaka mā vāni avivāhaka tarunayek rātriyak nāvātunot ahalapahala udaviya kumak sitayida?

Sunandā: 'ovuhu kumak situvat maṭa kamak nāha. tamun-nānse balāporottuvu dēval labāgānimaṭa nam ada rātri mehi navatinta ōnābava ēkantayi. nātahot ē balāporottu tavat dinakaṭa, enam aniddavanaturu pramadaviya hākiya.'

Benjamin: 'Sunandānōna kiyanne magē balāporottuvada? nātnam Sunandā nōnage balāporottuvada?'

Sunandā: '(tikak sinaha musuva) 'dennāgema balāporottuva'.

Benjamin: '(sinasemin) 'Sunandānōnage adahas itāmat guptabava pene. tikak pāhadilivanalesa hite pavatina balavat rahasa kiyanta.' "(1.)

(Benjamin: 'Well, if an unmarried youth like me stays in a small house like this, where an unmarried girl like you lives, what would the neighbours think, Sunanda?'

Sunanda: 'I don't mind what they think. It is certain that if you want to achieve what you hope, you must stay here tonight. If not, you will have to postpone that hope for another day.'

Benjamin: 'What hope is it that Miss Sunanda means? Miss Sunanda's or mine?'

(1.) Sirisena, Piyadasa. Cintamanikyaratnaya. Colombo.1930 p.113.

Sunanda: (Smiling a litte)'The hope of both of us'.

Benjamin: (smiling) 'Miss Sunanda's idea seems to be very mysterious'.(Please) reveal to me the great secret in your mind.'

This conversational style is not natural. The author tends to mix the speech of his characters with the grammar of the written language. In the phrases 'mata kamak naha', 'ahalapahala udaviya' and 'dennagema balaporottuva' he uses real speech but employs such terms and particles as 'vani', 'mebandu', 'kumak' etc., and traditional verbs to create a 'respectable' flavour in his style.

The narrative style in these novels is not very different from that of the dialogue. Occasionally when some incidents are presented in summary form a slightly different style has been used. Let us consider an example where an incident is presented in a lively way:

" Alfrad Silvā unnāhēlāge gedaraṭa siyaganan mitrayo rāsṽuha. vāḍi pirisa lansiṭ sankara sinhalayotyā. Alfrad Silvā unnāhēgē nonaṭa mē āṭhom eka vikārayak men vāṭa-huna namut kisivak kiyāgatanohi tusnimbhūta viya. ena ena minihā bār ekaṭa gos viskit soḍat bibī sānvic, pastāla, viskōtu, kēju ādiya kā midule tabā tibena puṭu uḍa āda vāṭeminda, samaharu gī sindu kiyaminda, samaharu ṭika ṭika vamanaya karaminda, samaharu katā pavatvaminda, gedara ekama kōlāhalayak viya." (1.)

('Hundreds of friends gathered at Mr. Alfrad Silva's house. The majority of them were 'lansi' and Sinhalese of mixed

descent. Although Alfred Silva's wife thought this 'At Home' was a ridiculous thing she could not say anything and kept quiet. The guests went into the 'bar' one after the other; drank Whisky and Soda; ate sandwiches, cutlets, biscuits, cheese etc.; some of them fell on the chairs in the yard; and some started to sing; some began to vomit a little; and yet some others delivered speeches. Thus a big confusion was caused in the house!)

This can be considered as a rare occasion of the use of simple, clear and pleasant style in the narrative in Sirisena's works. Usually it is slow moving and dull as is seen in the following instance:

"eka samāna vipat pāmīna anāta bhāvayaṭa pat Vijayasinha hā Silvā yana mēsinhala tarunayan dedena lapaṭikālaye paṭan kaya vehesā kisi kaṭayuttak karanṭa nūgat heyin kulīvāḍakvat koṭa jīvikāva karagata nohākiyen kanagāṭuvata patva kusaginnenda piḍitava kāgaluyana mahapāra digē gamankarana atara vattaka polkaḍanu dāka ehigos kurumbāgedidekak illūha. ehi pol kaḍana nāki manuṣyayā itā kanagāṭuvata patva mē tarunan dedenāta kurumbā gedidekak kanṭa dī mudalāli enṭa issara vahāma yaṇṭa kiveya. Vijayasinha hā Silvat tamahaṭa veccadē dannā namut raṭē toṭē toraturu hoṇḍahāti nodannā bāvin mahallāgen ē mudalāli kavarekda? āsaranayakuṭa kurumbāgediyak denta viruddhavana manusyayakut addayi asuha. eviṭa mahalu manuṣyayā oluve at tabāgena mesē kiyanta vanneya." (1.)

('These two Sinhalese youths, who had fallen into similar

(1) Sirisena, Piyadasa. Apata veccade. Colombo. 1924.

Fourth edition. p.51.

miserics, as they were not used to doing any kind of heavy work since their childhood and now were unable to labour for a living, became worried. They were walking along the Kegalla road starving when they saw somebody picking coconuts in an estate. They went up to him and begged him for two young coconuts. The old man who was plucking coconuts there, was kind and gave them two young coconuts and asked them to leave the estate before the owner arrived. As Vijayasinha and Silva did not know much about the world although they knew quite well what had happened to themselves they asked that man, ' Who is this owner? Are there such men who would object to giving a young coconut to a miserable person? Then that old man started to answer with his hand on his head.)

Sirisena wrote novels from 1906 until 1944. During this long period and through the large number of novels he wrote, his style has not changed appreciably. The minor novelists of the early period that we discussed earlier in this chapter share many characteristics with Sirisena as far as the narrative style is concerned. Sirisena's novels are mere stories about his contemporary society. In most of them we can find a romantic love theme which he never developed from an artistic point of view. Whatever the plot was, his aim was the same, social purification. The general narrative style of the day, even the language of the pulpit and of public speakers, and the style of journals, were sufficient for him to write a novel. Individual characterization, deep insight into the human mind or writing about personal emotional problems are hardly found in Sirisena's novels. The development of a subtle

suggestive and sensitive medium of narration cannot be expected from a novelist of this type. It is a task expected of a real artist; but Sirisena and most of his contemporary Sinhalese writers of fiction were not, unfortunately, real artists. The attitude of the early Sinhalese novelists was puritan not only towards social problems but also towards the language. They were not tolerant of the new aspects of either society or language. This is how Sirisena looks down upon the Sinhalese style of the Christian writers:

" 'O, how many writers of stories are there nowadays who read English novels and just translate them into Sinhalese, editors of newspapers unable even to write a sentence of four words correctly, and poets who do not know what a poem is. Is not our misery clearly seen through the misfortune that has happened to our language? How many new types of Sinhalese such as Church Sinhalese (palli hingala) Catholic Sinhala (katolika hingala), Bible Sinhala (baibal hingala), Goncalvez Sinhala (gon-salves hingala), English Sinhala (Ingirisi hingala), Lansi Sinhala (lansi hingala), have now entered into our Aryan language."(1.)

Thus Sirisena considered the Sinhalese language of the same importance as Buddhism and national culture, which he wanted to be preserved in their original, pure form. If we examine the various types of Sinhala that Sirisena names in the passage above, we can learn about a variety of aspects which

occurred in the language after the eighteenth century through various literary movements discussed in the previous chapters. What he calls 'palli hingala' should be the Sinhalese used by the Christian priests at the mass, and 'Katolika hingala' must be the Sinhalese used by Catholic writers in their newspapers and journals. 'Bible Sinhala' is the style in Sinhalese translations of the Bible. 'Gonçalvez Sinhala' is the style of the famous Christian writer Father Jacome Goncalvez. All these types thus belong to the Christian Sinhalese literature and between them, actually, no considerable difference may be discerned. But as we have seen, the Sinhalese of Christian literature in general is different from the Sinhalese of classical literature and grammar. What Sirisena means by 'ingirisi Sinhala' could be either the Sinhalese spoken by the English people in Ceylon or more probably the new Sinhalese terms and words derived from the English language. As we have observed from time to time in this study terms and expressions which are quite new in the Sinhalese language are used by the novelists, which are obviously taken or derived from English or coined to express an idea common in English but new in Sinhalese. 'Lansi Sinhala' is the Sinhalese spoken by the small community of Burghers in Ceylon.

But in the
Sinh. literature
different

In any living language various aspects and strata like these can be found. It is natural and it is in this way that a language develops and enriches its vocabulary and powers of expression. Thus in Ceylon, quite apart from the types of

Sinhala that Sirisena pointed out, we can see that the Moslem people speak a different 'language-form' which is also called Sinhala and understood by natives. The same language within its basic pattern and vocabulary differs from region to region and community to community. The novelist cannot pass these differences unnoticed. In the portrayal of character he has to take these subtleties of the language into consideration and make use of them. A few instances are seen in Sirisena's novels where he uses the language of Christian priests, Moslem peddlars etc., as they really speak it:

" (pūjāprasādi tāna) 'Appuhāmi, buddhāgam kārayakuṭa rāvaṭī suddhavu sabhāvaṭa viruddhava kriyākaranavāyayi āranciya. ēka hābānam adama komisan kara devihāmuduruvaṇṭa yāgnakara dēvavaraprāsada labāgaṇṭa ōnā.'

'ēka metanaṭa ōnā' karana ekak noveyi. Appuhāmi parikṣāvaṭa vāṭī tibenava. yakṣayāge māyamaṭa rāvaṭeṇṭa epā. sadākāla apāyaṭa yaṇṭa vīriya karaṇṭa epā!"(1.)

'Vijayasinha hāminēṭa ingrisi bārinamut Vāl pādili tānaṭa 'pādili hingala' puluvankama tibuneya. eheyin Vijayasinha hāminēt samaga katākaraṇṭa paṭangattēya.

'nōna mahatmayā mehi laṅgā unā-mokada kāriya?'

'mokada ē lamayā mama dānavā-magen ōnā ekakaṭa mama lēstiya.'

'tamunnāhelāge pohosatkama koccara ādda?'"(2.)

('the priest) 'Appuhami, we hear that you are working against the Holy Church, being deceived by a Buddhist. If that is true, you must confess today and receive

(1.) 'Jayatissa and Rosalind' pp.79-80

(2.) Apata veccade. p.32

the blessing of God'.

'That is not needed now. Appuhami, you have fallen into temptation. Do not be misled by the Devil. Try not to fall into the eternal hell!'

'Although Mrs. Vijayasinha did not know English, Father Wells could speak 'padili Sinhala'. Therefore he started to speak with Mrs. Vijayasinha.

'Madam you have come here, what is the matter?'

'Why, I know that boy, I am ready for what ever you expect fromme.

'How rich are you?')

Although Sirisena has used the natural speech of these characters in this instance, as we have seen, he usually does not consider it as an indispensable feature of portrayal of character in the novel. In these examples, despite the fact that the speech is natural, Sirisena's purpose seems to be sarcasm rather than achieving any artistic value. A term like 'komisan kara' (confess) is used by Christians, so are terms such as 'deva varaprasada', (blessings of God), 'pariksavata vati tibenava' (fallen into temptation) etc., which are understood only by the Christian community. These new terms in the Sinhalese language were not welcomed by Buddhist writers like Sirisena.

What we can appreciate of Sirisena as a novelist is the service he rendered to establish the novel as an important literary form among the Sinhalese readers. Although he did not like to regard his own works as ordinary novels, he produced them continuously and helped the growth of a readership.

for the novel. Unlike fiction of other writers of the time his works were allowed to be read by children and at schools because the adults believed that Sirisena would not say anything to deprave them. The immediate success of Jayasissa and Rosalind may be attributed to the fact that it carried a long controversy on Buddhism and Christianity ending in the victory of the Buddhists. The Buddhist monks who had a great responsibility for the education of the Buddhist children must have helped towards the popularity of this work. Thereafter it was with enormous satisfaction that Sirisena continued to write fiction when he saw that his books were sold in their thousands, which is a 'miracle' in Ceylon even today. As a hero of the nationalistic movement and as an editor of a popular journal he was familiar with the current problems of his country and especially the spiritual 'bankruptcy' of his people. In order to restore the nation, Sirisena thought that religion and language should be purified and protected together with culture. It was with this objective that he wrote fiction; an objective which at least partly he gained in his life time.

W.A. Silva (1890-1957) experiments in the Use of Language in Fiction:

More than any other novelist of the early period W.A. Silva was interested in the use of language in fiction. The first impression we get by reading his novels is that he liked writing in the 'educated' style. As is seen in the many novels

he created, he has nevertheless paid considerable attention to various speech types and literary styles. In the following discussion of his novels we will see that he was persistently aware of the importance of the language in a novel. By comparison of his works with those of Sirisena we can see that W.A. Silva was not using the novel for political, religious or cultural purposes. In his first novel, 'Siriyalata', he did not attempt to keep to all the rules of the traditional grammar and the idiom of the purists. In the long foreword to the fifth edition of this work W.A. Silva says that when he first wrote it he did not have the slightest idea of Sinhalese grammar. Further he says that he learnt grammar some time later and 'it was after that, that I saw the mistakes in 'Siriyalata'. 'I wrote thereafter in many ways. I did so because I wanted to know how far one could change the pattern of sentences in Sinhalese.' (1.)

In the same foreword and in other places W.A. Silva has said that he used a 'pedantic' style in his next work 'Laksmi' because the educated readers and critics laughed at the loose structure in the language of Siriyalata. He says that the styles in his subsequent works were different from the previous ones. 'In future, some one examining my books might say 'the person who wrote Siriyalata cannot be the writer of

(1.) Silva, W.A. Siriyalata or the Orphan Girl. 5th edition 1953. the foreword. (By 'grammar' of course he means traditional formal grammar.)

Lakṣmi; and he who wrote Lakṣmi cannot be the author of Sunetra; he who wrote Sunetra is not the man who wrote Kalahaṇḍa; and the author of Kālāhaṇḍa is not the writer of Haṇḍapāna.'(1.) Thus by trying a different style in each of his works what he intended was to 'develop our language.'

W.A. Silva's novels can be classified into five groups; Siriyalatā (1909), Pāsāl Guruvarī (The Schoolmistress)(1924) and Kālāhaṇḍa (The Forest Moon)(1933) can be classified as social novels. Lakṣmi (1922) is an adventure story. Hiṅgana Kolla (The Beggar boy) (1923), Haṇḍapāna (The Moonlight)(1941) and Juli Hata (July Seventh) (1943) are crime and mystery stories. Radala Piliruva (The Puppet-Nobleman)(1939) is a humorous novel. Sunētrā (1936), Daiva Yogaya (Moment of Fate) (1936) and Vijāyabā Kollaya (The Assassination of King Vijaya-bahu) (1938) are historical novels.

It was not only in the novel that W.A. Silva was interested. He also wrote many short stories which are published in the collections Deyyannerate (1927)(In God's Country), Dalakumāri (1957)(The Water Nymph), Lēnsuva (1947)(The Handkerchief) Amruta Hastaya (1952)(The Ambrosial Hand) etc., He was interested in translating popular classical works such as Ramayana and The Arabian Nights; the latter work was translated by Silva as 'Ekdāhaṣa Ekraya'(1951). In addition to these works

(1.) Silva, W.A. Siriyalata or the Orphan Girl. 5th edition 1953. The foreword.

he wrote one play, i.e. Māyā Yogaya (1948).

Later he became interested in teaching the art of fiction and wrote a series of articles to the Sinhalese periodical, Navayugaya. It was in this magazine that Ridihavadiya (n.d.) (The Silver Chain), which was the last novel of W.A. Silva was serialized.

Siriyalata (1909)(a name of a girl) was written when the author was seventeen. As he claimed later, he was not aware of style when he wrote this novel. He was nevertheless, interested in creating an interesting story. In Siriyalata the influence of the Victorian novel can be clearly seen. We cannot trace any particular English novel that Silva followed; however, we find the construction of the plot and its development largely influenced by the novels of Thomas Hardy. Siriyalata is supposedly an orphan girl who was later revealed to be the daughter of Sir George Vijayagunavardhana and his former wife, Siriyavati. One of Sir George's former mistresses, Jessica Rock comes to Ceylon and meets Siriyavati and tells her that she was married to Sir George in England. Siriyavati believes her and leaves her husband and lives a secret life with her daughter. On her deathbed she gives a pendant (surayak) to her daughter and says that in distress it will be helpful to her, but dies before she can tell her how to use it. The daughter, who was now known as Agnes, becomes a servant of Carolina, the daughter of a rich landlord. Carolina's

suitors, Gunasekara, falls in love with pretty Agnes, but she despises him. One day, while Agnes was running away from Gunasekara, she was helped by Sirimanna Ritigala, who entrusts her to Mrs. Goodwin, promises to marry her and then goes to England for higher education. During the following three years Agnes faces many troubles as a result of the crafty plans of Gunasekara who tries to marry Carolina first and to kill her father and then to get rid of her and become rich. Then he intends to marry Agnes. With the help of an enemy of Carolina's father, Gunasekara almost succeeds in his plans. On his wedding day to Agnes, who was forced to marry him to save her guardians from his threats, he was murdered by Carolina, who although in prison at that time, as a result of another device by him, has escaped. After the death of Gunasekara, Agnes meets her former lover, Sirimanna, after some coincidences. She sees her mother's photograph in the study of Sir George and realizes that he is her father. Then she tells him about the pendant given to her by her mother and they open it and find a letter revealing all the secrets. This revelation proves that she was not an orphan girl and her true name was Siriyalata. As usual in romantic novels the lovers are married in the end.

This plot is typical of early English novels. The life of maid servants, who undergo misfortunes until their true identity is found, was a pet theme in the English novel after 'Pamela, or Virtue rewarded' by Richardson. Even some

incidents of that novel, such as how Mr. B. pursues Pamela, can be compared with Gunasekara's advances towards Agnes. The first part of Siriyalata also includes some incidents which reminds us of Jane Eyre by C. Bronte. Jane and Agnes are orphan girls. Just as Agnes was entrusted to Carolina by Sophi Hami, Jane was consigned to Lowood Asylum by Mrs. Reed. This also can be compared with how Sirimanna consigned Agnes to Goodwin's Tutorship. As a result of a forged letter by Gunasekara, Agnes runs away from this tutorship and tries to commit suicide, but was prevented from doing so by the Rev. Vijayasuriya and taken to his house and looked after as a daughter. This reminds us of Revd. St. John Rivers and his sisters who took care of Jane. If we consider a novel like 'Desperate Remedies' by Thomas Hardy we can find some similar characters and events to those in Siriyalata. The wife of Revd. Vijayasuriya compells Agnes to marry Gunasekara because he was threatening her to take her husband to court. This is similar to Miss Aldclyffe in Desperate Remedies, urging Cytherea to marry Manston because they were bound by a common secret. For example:

" My daughter, if you will marry Mr. Gunasekara, we can be rid of this shameful affair. You also will be the wife of a respectable person. Daughter, please don't turn away your face with displeasure. Although you despise him he is a very suitable youth for you. I tell you the truth. He is superior to many other youths by his learning, wealth, position and fame. In fact, you must be happy that such a person is proposing to you.

He is a much better youth than your Marshal who broke his promise."

"If you try to love Mr. Gunasekara, at least a little, it will be a great help to us. And what a pleasure it will be for you! It is also a good opportunity for you to save the life of a father who saved your life. If you don't take this chance to show your gratitude, what a sin it will be."(1.)

Now let us compare this with the following passages from Desperate Remedies:

"Now there, there; you want to be off, and have a good cry,' said Miss Aldclyffe, taking her hand. 'But you mustn't my dear. There's nothing in the past for you to regret. Compare Mr. Manston's honourable conduct towards his wife and yourself, with Springrove towards his betrothed and yourself, and then see which appears the more worthy of your thoughts.'"

"..and accept him before he changes his mind. The chance which he offers you of settling in life is one that may possibly, probably, not occur again. His position is good and secure, and the life of his wife would be a happy one. You may not be sure that you love him madly; but suppose you are not sure?"(2.)

"'On your promising that you will accept him some time this year, I will take especial care of your brother.'"(3)

In the passages from Siriyalata, Mrs. Vijayasuriya asks Agnes to marry Gunasekara on the grounds that she could save

-
- (1.) Silva, W.A. Siriyalata or the Orphan Girl. Colombo. 1953
Fifth edition. p.122 & 123.
(2.) Hardy, Thomas. Desperate Remedies. London. 1960. p.243
(3.) ibid.

the life of her husband by accepting the offer. Mrs. Vijaya-suriya, though she loved her adopted daughter Agnes very much, cared more about her husband's social position. Her husband owed a large amount of money to Gunasekara, and had failed to repay it. Gunasekara threatened to sue him if Agnes would not marry him. In the latter case, Miss Aldclyffe loved both Cytherea and Manston, the former being the daughter of her true lover and the latter her own illegitimate son. Cytherea's brother had been an invalid for some time whom she couldn't support without the help of Miss Aldclyffe. Agnes could not help her (adopted) father unless she agreed to Gunasekara's proposal.

Although we find these similarities we cannot say that W.A. Silva has deliberately imitated these English novels. But the plots and techniques in his novels show a close resemblance to them. In some of his other novels, as Saratchandra has observed, W.A. Silva has adapted foreign plays and novels. For example we can consider his second novel, *Laksmi or the Immortal Queen* (1922).

Laksmi is an unusually long and complicated Sinhalese novel for the time it was written. In this novel there are two plots; the first, the story of Sirimal Banda, his family and Dr. Vijayasiri and the old Mr. Jayanayaka. The second or internal plot is about the eternal queen (*Laksmi*) and Dr. Vijayasiri's mysterious love affair. As a result of some murders in Ceylon, Sirimal Banda escapes to the country of Avakans

(Afghanistan) and later kidnaps Dr. Vijayasiri and old Jayanayaka to find out from them the whereabouts of John Jayanayaka, the murderer of his relations. In this mysterious country of ^Avakans they face many dreadful experiences. Sirimal is now the prime minister of that country where he exerts considerable power over the king. After some time Vijayasiri learns about the eternal queen and the great treasure in Mangayi mountain, and one day, he actually meets Laksmi. There he falls in love with her, she takes him to her wonderful kingdom and shows him by a magic (flash back) vision the long history of their love which dates from the time of the Babylonian empire. Vijayasiri, at the end of the adventures in Sri Nagar, loses the only chance of meeting Laksmi again, as he could not follow her instructions. In the end, the Sinhalese people who were fighting against each other become friends when they find that one of the kings who invaded the country was, the murderer John Jayanayaka.

This story is woven interestingly together with many subplots as well as the two main plots. The character of Sirimal Banda becomes more interesting than that of the hero, Vijayasiri. The old Mr. Jayanayaka seems to be too old, weak and unadventurous to go through all the frightful experiences in the story. The heroine, Laksmi, appears only as an illusion and does not impress the reader to the extent that the author expects. When the mysteries begin to be revealed one by one, the reader wonders why all these Sinhalese people went

all the way to Sri Nagar in the country of Avakan. Sirimal Banda's becoming prime minister and Jayanayaka becoming a king are some other aspects which seem incredible. If we compare the story in 'She' by Rider Haggard we shall be able to answer some of these queries.

The plot in She is centred upon the adventures of Horace Holly and Leo Vincey. The story is presented as the true documents written by Holly, the author only edits them. Leo is the adopted son of Holly. At the very beginning of the story we come to know that Leo is the descendant of an old Greek family. He is unusually handsome, strong and intelligent. Holly is a wellknown scholar at Cambridge and versed in ancient Greek and Egyptian languages. Eversince he came to know about the mystery concerning himself, he had prepared for the adventure and learned Arabic together with Leo. Thus they prepare for a long time to explore the mysterious country of Kor. According to the wish of Leo's late father and with the clues found in the ancient writings and articles left by him, Leo and Holly set about to find 'she' and the Rolling Pillar of life. According to the writings on an old potsherd, Leo is the reincarnation of Kallikrates who was the husband of the Egyptian princess Amenartas. Kallikrates had fled with Amenartas to the strange city called Kor, the kingdom of 'She' where the people killed all strangers by placing hot pots on their heads. There, 'She' fell in love with Kallikrates and asked him to marry her and leave Amenartas. Failing to win

him over, even after telling him the secret of the 'rolling pillar of life', 'She' kills Kallikrates. She killed him out of overwhelming love and had been waiting for his reincarnation through the centuries. After some adventures Leo and Holly arrive in this great fallen city, where there are caves of which no man has seen the end. There they find that most of the things they learnt from the old potsherd were true. The great city of Kor was still reigned over by 'She', whom the people believed eternal, and called 'She-who-should-be-obeyed'.

At Kor the people called Amahagger, spoke a bastard Arabic. The two English adventurers who were received with warm welcome by She, learn all the secrets of that city from her. She displays, through some events, her superhuman powers as well as her human aspects. Ustane, an Amahagger woman who married Leo soon after his arrival in Kor, according to the custom of that city, loves him and protects him from some dangers; but She envies her and taking her as her old rival 'Amenartas' kills her by her magic power. Now, Leo loves 'She' madly and she promises to take him to the rolling pillar of life, a fire which gives eternal life. Over precipitous rocks and high cliffs, they go to see this fire. When they arrive at it, She asks Leo to bathe in the fire to achieve eternal life to become her husband. Ayesha (the real name of She) plans to make her lover as eternal as herself and to leave that fallen city of Kor to come to England to make Leo

the King. Leo hesitates to jump into the fire; then in order to encourage him She bathes in it. When She came out of the fire, a strange thing happened; the fire did not have its usual effect on her; instead She lost her divine beauty, shrivelled to the size and shape of an old monkey and died. With great difficulties Leo and Holly find their way back to the place where they had left Ayesha's servants. Billali, an old Amahagger nobleman whose life was once saved by Holly, helps him to escape from Kor with Leo.

Most of the adventures in this story are as incredible as those in Laksmi. But from the beginning the reader's mind is prepared for such adventures and they impress him a great deal. According to the way Leo is brought up by Holly he becomes capable of undergoing those experiences. The physical strength of Holly and Leo, as well as their learning, are emphasised at the beginning. The very figure of Leo implies his relation to a mysterious past. Even before She is presented in the story, we feel her magic power, immortality and indescribable beauty. The skill of the author as a writer of adventure stories is seen in the depiction of characters of Leo, Holly and Ustane. Although the setting is in the imaginary city of Kor, we feel that most of the sentimental experiences of Leo and Ustane could take place in any human society.

When we compare this with Laksmi, at once we find that the latter consists of two main plots of which the first dominates

the story and the character of the heroine in the second is not adequately developed. Laksmi exists only as an ambiguous being. Her city is situated in a dream world, unlike the city of Ayesha. When Leo and Holly go to Kor the clear picture presented by the author entices the reader, whereas Laksmi's city is only an insignificant illusion. Unlike the adventurers in *She*, those in Laksmi are not prepared to face those experiences and therefore most of their adventures become unbelievable. Vijayasiri was only a doctor and Jayanayaka his old friend. But when they were kidnapped by Sirimal they behave as if they had been expecting adventures and training for a long time. Vijayasiri becomes a strong fighter with physical strength, skilful with guns as well as with the sword. Because of the age of Jayanayaka he is not helpful to Vijayasiri, but only a burden. In *She*, Holly is presented from the beginning as fond of hunting and as a man of good health and strength. To show Vijayasiri's relation with Laksmi W.A. Silva creates a plot very similar to the story of Leo and Ayesha. The main characters, Ayesha = Leo and Laksmi = Vijayasiri, are comparable. In the story of *She* the existence of Ayesha through the centuries is closely related to her love of Kallikrates. The whole past and present stories due to this 'eternal love' become one romantic love story. In Laksmi in the past story, love does not play such an important part as in *She*. Here Rashina, the former queen of 'Belshazzar', was trying to protect her virginity as she

hoped to meet the Lord of Gaya (the Buddha), obtain the secret of a certain treasure from him and save the great kingdom of Babylon from invasion by Cyrus of Persia. Maninaga (Vijayasiri in this life) promised to take her to see the Buddha; and when they were fleeing from the palace they were checked by Belshazzar, whom Rashina turned into a mute dwarf who nevertheless kills her later. While seeing the magic vision created by Laksmi to reveal this past episode, Vijayasiri realizes that the mute-dwarf is in fact the mute-dwarf servant of his enemy, Sirimal Banda. The original relationship of Rashina and Maninaga (Laksmi and Vijayasiri) is not based on love. Rashina was not as passionate as Ayesha. Ayesha killed Kallikrates because she could not possess him. In Laksmi Rashina does not kill any body; instead she was killed by (Belshazzar) the mute-dwarf.

Unlike Rashina, Ayesha could use her magic power as many times as she liked. Like the magic mirror of Ayesha, Rashina had a magic jewel through which she could see into the future and the past. Amenartas wished to escape to Greece just as Rashina wished to escape to India. A great difference of Laksmi from She is that W.A. Silva does not like Rider Haggard show Vijayasiri's identity with Maninaga by means of historical and archeological evidence.(1.)

(1.) See. Haggard, Rider. She, A history of adventure. London.1890. Chapter.3.

'Radalapilurava' is another of W.A.Silva's novels of which the plot is not original. After the criticism by Saratchandra, W.A. Silva admitted that he took the plot from a Moliere play. In the foreword to the second edition of Radalapiluruva, W.A. Silva says that 'this 'Radalapiluruva' is not a creation of our own'. Writing a long introduction to the fifth edition of Siriyalata, he attacks the critics who pointed out his indebtedness to Rider Haggard, Moliere, Sheridan, etc. "'Ah: what is this? This is a play by Sheridan, and this is from Moliere-' to say this, takes only a second. When we compare works which are mere translations of western novels of these 'artists', with my work which is an adaptation of a play, one would see how different my Vijayabakollaya is." Here W. A. Silva is trying to emphasise that although he adapted the plays of Sheridan (Pisarro as Vijayabakollaya) and Moliere (Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme as Radalapiluruva) it is not an easy task; some other Sinhalese novelists who were considered by critics as real artists, have translated some western novels into Sinhalese, which is a less difficult task than what he had done!

We can agree that adapting a play into a novel is a difficult task. As W.A. Silva says, the script of a play is only a 'skeleton'. In adapting Moliere's play, which is highly humorous, Silva has done it so skilfully and appropriately to Ceylonese society that any reader who is ignorant of 'Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme' would consider it as an original

work by Silva. Silva does not change the principal characters or events in the play. Thus, M.Jourdain, Madame Jourdain, Lucile, Cleonte, Dorimene, Dorante are represented by Mr. Raphael, Helena (his wife), Nandavatie, Gilbert, Lavinia and Charley Hamu, respectively. Most of the other minor characters such as the music master, dancing master, and philosophy master are also found in Radalapiliruva. Most of the humorous incidents which sound very 'Sinhalese' are nothing but clever translations. For example:

" etakoṭa miṣṭa Rafayal kāmāti ehema ekak paḍyayen
 kiyanṇaḍa, gaḍyayen kiyanṇaḍa?'
 'paḍya kiyanne monavāḍa'
 'gaḍya novana siyalla paḍyayi'
 'gaḍyaya kiyanne?'
 'paḍya novana siyalla gaḍyayi'
 'maṭa oya gaḍya-paḍyavala vaga tērenne nāhā, paṇḍitumā
 vistara karanna' yanuvēn Rapiyel bās ivasum nātiva kīya.
 'koṭinma miṣṭa Rafayal, apaṭa liyum kiyum kisivak karanna
 bāhā oya dekaṭa ātulāt novanna'
 'monava, ēka haba puḍumayak nova?'
 'puḍumayak tamā, oya dān miṣṭa rafāyal katākale gaḍyaya'
 'helenā mehātā enna kiyā mā dān mage biriṇḍaṭa katākalot
 ē gaḍyada?'
 'ovu'
 'ilavve mā danne dān novā? avuruḍu hatalis gānak mā
 katakara tibenne gaḍya vittiya' kiyamin rapiyal bās tavat
 puḍumavi..."(1.)

The corresponding passage from the English translation of Moliere's play is as follows:

(1.) Silva, W.A. Radalapiliruva. Colombo. 1954. Second edition.
 pp. 222/223

"Philosophy Master: 'Because, Monsieur, there are only two ways of expressing oneself, in prose or in verse'.

M. Jourdain: 'There is nothing except prose or verse?'

Phil. Master: 'No, Monsieur, Whatever is not prose is verse, and whatever is not verse is prose.'

M. Jourdain: 'What is ordinary speech then?'

Phil. Master: 'Prose.'

M. Jourdain: 'What! When I say: 'Nicole, fetch me my slippers, and give me my night cap' is that prose?'

Phil. Master: 'Yes, Monsieur.'

M. Jourdain: 'Good heavens! Then I have been speaking prose for more than forty years without knowing it. I couldn't be more grateful to you for teaching me that..... ' (1.)

Silva adapts the original to be extremely appropriate in Sinhalese. The Philosophy Master in the original becomes a 'scholar' (pandituma) in the Sinhalese version. Like most of the 'pundits' of that time this one is also versed in Sanskrit, Pali, classical poetics and prosody etc. Although in the example above, the joke about teaching the difference between prose and verse is taken from Moliere, it sounds quite natural in the Sinhalese version as the author had already given us an idea about the character of this pundit. The main character, Rapiyal Bas, seems only another of the typical characters in the Sinhalese novel of Silva's time. In our previous discussion on the novels of M.C.F. Perera, for

(1.) Gravely, George. Six prose Comedies of Moliere.

London. 1956. p. 253.

example, we saw that the rich 'mudalali' in Sirimadura was somewhat like Rapiyal Bas. He too was newly prosperous and was deceived by Silva just as Rapiyal Bas was by Charley Hamu. Lizzy and Mera, the mother and daughter in Sirimadura, are similar to Helena and Nandavati in Radalapiliruva. The two husbands are easily deceived by cunning friends because of their pride of newly acquired wealth and their obsession for joining the upper classes; but their wives and daughters are different, as they dislike extravagance and want to live a simple, unspoilt life. Thus we find that the type of character represented through Rapiyal Bas (M. Jourdain in Moliere's play) was not unsuitable for a Sinhalese novel, and had been presented by other novelists such as M.C.F. Perera and Siri-sena. It also suited the Sinhalese society at the beginning of the century.

Among the other novels of W.A. Silva, Hingana Kolla (the beggar boy) was one of the most popular Sinhalese novels of the early period. A slight similarity can be traced between the characters of Hinganakolla and Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens. The development of the two characters are different to some extent; but the revelation of the parentage of the two boys bears some similarity. Like Oliver, Morris (Hinganakolla) too is the son of a well to do, respectable father. Oliver's character develops through a series of credible events while the latter's is presented mostly through miraculous incidents. The reader cannot sympathise with the

life of Morris as W.A. Silva mostly incorporates elements of violence and fate. 'Hinganakolla' became popular not because it was a novel of high artistic value but because of its sensational quality.

Kalahanda(the forest moon) was criticised by Saratchandra as the 'least valuable' work of Silva.(1). It was mainly because of the unnatural nature of the plot that Saratchandra condemned it. John Jayapala falling in love with Malini, a village beauty, and his secret betrothal to her; Malini living in Colombo and learning English and western music; her life in India to become a famous dancer in the assumed name of Visnabayi; and eventually, when she came back to Colombo, Jayapala's and his mother's failure to recognize her etc., are considered by Saratchandra as the most unnatural aspects in this story. Some of these incidents we can admit as unnatural and impossible. In a long novel like Kalahanda such features, especially in the time of Silva, cannot be taken as adequate grounds to condemn it. If we examine some novels, universally accepted as masterpieces, we may find some features in them which are unnatural or unreal. Novels should be considered as a whole and the emphasis should be put on the final impression they make on the reader. Compared with some other novels by this author, such as Juli Hata (Seventh July) and Handapana (The Moonlight), this novel seems to possess many virtues as regards the depiction of interesting pictures of (1.) Saratchandra.E.R. Sinhala Navakata Itihasaya HaVicaraya. p. 71.

Re-visit rural society in Ceylon and the author's understanding of human nature, as seen in characters such as Malini, Jayapala and his mother. Also in this novel, unlike many popular Sinhalese novels, the characters cannot be classified as hero and villain and the heroine does not succeed in the end. She commits suicide as does Tess in 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles' of Thomas Hardy. When we consider Malini's life we feel that she too was only a "sport" for both fate and social institutions, just as Tess was.

According to Saratchandra, it is only the historical novels of W.A. Silva that would attract the attention of the critical reader to any great extent. 'Vijayaba Kollaya' (The Assassination of Vijayabahu), Sunetra (a name) and Daiva Yogaya (The Moment of Fate) are three historical novels by Silva. Among these the first one is considered to be influenced by the play 'Pizarro' by Sheridan.(1). Although Silva has taken the plot and most of the main characters from Sheridan, he creates a novel which can be taken as a fine historical picture of the social and political situation in sixteenth century Ceylon. We are captured by the charm and glamour of the characters he creates and the non-historic plot about Nilamani, Asanga and Nayananda, interests us as a fresh love story. When Silva depicts the mind of Nilamani

(1.) Saratchandra, E.R. 'Sinhala Navakata, Itihasaya ha Vicaraya.' p.74.

in her problem of how to choose between Asanga and Nayana-nanda, we feel that Silva had the ability to create realistic and complicated characters if he really wished. In Sunetra, the heroine (Sunetra) does not appeal to the mind of the reader, as she is presented in such a way that we feel that some thing is lacking in her character. When we read about Nilamani we can experience her presence besides us and also how she suffers when her mind wavers between her two lovers. About Sunetra, what we experience is only a superficiality. The historical figure of king Rajasingha, as other critics too have pointed out, is portrayed with depth and life. The third of the historical novels, Daiva Yogaya, is the least interesting story. The most interesting character in this story is that of princess Lanka. The author fails to draw an adequate picture of the historical and social atmosphere in the Polonnaruwa period, in contrast with the picture of the Kotte period in the two other historical novels.

W.A. Silva is known as a popular novelist as well as a leading stylist. As mentioned at the beginning of this discussion he was persistently experimenting to develop a suitable style for the novel. From 1909 to 1922, it seems that he was learning languages and literature. As a result of the reaction of some of the critics to the language of Siriyalata he employed an elevated style in his second novel, Laksmi, in order to attract the attention of the scholarly reader. Consider the style in the following passage from Siriyalata:

" āyi, lamayo, lassanayi nokiya vena monava kiyannada?
āti pāti tākaka nam uṃbat daruvek tamayi, kiyā Johānā
 hisa vanamin, 'mokada me lāstivelā inne dividena ekka
 ravume yannadāyi?' āsuvāya."(1)

(Why my child what else can I say except 'pretty'? If you were from a rich family you would not be treated in this bad way. Saying thus and shaking her head Johana asked, 'Why have you got ready like this, are you going to stroll with that 'tigress'?)

It is said that the word 'lassana' in this passage was criticised, when the book was first published, as unsuitable in writing. The hostility towards this word was due to the fact that it is the usage of the common man. The pedantic term is 'laksana', the Sanskrit form of the word. W.A. Silva was more sensible to use 'lassana' because that is how it is pronounced not only by a servant woman like Johana but also by any scholar. Terms such as 'ati pati tanaka' and 'dividena' too show Silva's familiarity with the idiom of the common speech. Even today in villages we hear the term 'ati pati tana' (a rich family) instead of 'pohosat' and 'dividena' (tigress) as equivalent to 'hari napuru gani' to mean a cruel woman. This work, Siriyalata, in addition to the sporadic use of simple, idiomatic language as seen in this example, contains a variety of other styles. The narrative style in Siriyalata is simple and similar to that of M.C.^F. Perera

and Vimalanata. For example:

" igenīmehida Āgnas itā samat vūvāya. 'āyagē dhārana śaktiya gāna Gudvin nōnā pavā noyekviṭa puduma vūvāya. mē sulu kālaya 'ātulata ōtomō ingirisi pasvana pramāna-yaṭada, māhum getum ādiya itā usas lesada praguna kalāya. ingirisi katākirīmē ātivū caturatāvaya nisā ā ingirisi taruniyaka hā samavūvāya. nivāradi lesa ingirisi vacana śabdakarana ekama sinhala taruniya yayi Gudvin nōnā noyekviṭa āyaṭa prasansā kalāya."(1)

(Agnes was very bright in her studies. Even Mrs. Goodwin was surprised many times at her power of memory. During this short period, she learnt English upto the fifth standard and sewing and embroidery very well. Her fluency in English was that of an English girl. She was praised by Mrs. Goodwin as the only Sinhalese girl that pronounced English correctly.)

The narrative in Laksmi is entirely 'elevated'. Consider the following passage:

"ovuhu yalit bāsma paṭan gatha. apa vīrayāge dēha śaktiya yamtamvat pirihunē nāta. ehet asarana mahallāgē tatvaya kesēvat tuṣṭidāyaka noviya. hetema dān dān klānta vī, prapātayaṭa vāṭēyayi nirantarayen situvēya. tavat ādi sīyak pamana prapatanaya karana atara, vrukṣayo kramayen hā sankhyāven ha pramānayen da hīna vūha. tavada kanda parvatayaka hāḍaya ganimin tanhi tanhi parikīrna gal kuluvalin gahana viya. yalit ādi siyayak pamana basi-na kala, vrukṣa gulmāvvruta svabhāvaya sampurnayenma antardhāna viya. esēda vuva, ovunaṭa avarohanāśakya bhāvayak nam noviya."(2)

(1) Siriyalata. p.83.

(2) Silva, W.A. Laksmi or the immortal queen, fifth edition. Colombo.1959. p.131.

(They resumed descending. Our hero's strength did not weaken at all. The old man's condition was not by any means hopeful. He feared continuously, that he would faint and fall down the hill at any moment. As they descended yet another hundred feet, the trees decreased in number and size. Further on the mountain shaped into a rock with diffused cliffs. By about another hundred feet below there were no trees or shrubs at all. But they were not yet unable to descend.)

"mangayi nam vu me parama ramanīya siddhasthānaya, mesē mē adhamayange nindita, tuccha mleccha kriyāvakaṭa keli-maṇḍalak vū namudu meyin aṭalos śatavarsāyakaṭa pūrva-yehidī vicitrāti nirmala prakarśa paryantaprāpta ārya śreṣṭhayaṅgē viśrāmaya pinisa pāvatiyēya. ekala suvarna surabhigandha puśpōpahāra samalankrutavū mē kaṇḍu talāvō mekala men anārya narabili karmayaka keli naraṁbanu yāṭiva rāśi bhūtavū vanacarayanhaṭa suvapahas pinisa nova mārgādhigama lābhi mahōttamayanhaṭa divā viharanaya pinisa vūha."(1)

(This extremely beautiful shrine called Mangayi, although now it is the spot for the sports of these mean savages was the resting place for the 'surprisingly unsullied'* great Aryans, eighteen centuries before. In those days the mountains, covered with sweet smelling golden flowers were the day-time dwellings of sacred priests who had attained the fruits of the noble paths, and not the shelter for savages who gather to watch a human sacrifice.)

These examples should be sufficient to show the 'pedantic' aspects in the style in Laksmi. Although there are some

(1.) Laksmi or the immortal queen. p.177

(*) W.A. Silva's own translation.

passages in the novel which are not as full of Sanskrit words as these examples, there are some other passages which are much more full of Sanskrit words. The abundance of these difficult Sanskrit words is a great obstacle for the reader; perhaps because of this, the author translates all the most difficult words into English in the Appendix. When he does not employ Sanskrit words Silva writes in a lively and pleasant style. For instance:

"Sakurja svabhāvayenma eḍitara vīrayek vuvada, mehidī ohu hada biyen sālenṇaṭa viya. mahalu Jayanāyaka mahatāṭa kelin siṭinu pavā nohakiva, vāni vānī gos mullaka vāḍi vī, digu ravula sahita nikaṭa yugat mata raṇḍavāgena, gon māllaku men hati lannaṭa vunēya. ehet vijayasiri pamanak viya yuttak vēvāyi ek sit sitāgena, dora samī-payehima rakavalgena siṭiyēya."(1)

(At this moment Sakuraja's heart began to tremble with fear, though usually he was a brave hero. The old Mr. Jayanayaka, unable even to stand straight, staggered into a corner, sat there and began to gasp like an old ox. It was only Vijayasiri who thought 'come what may' and kept watch at the door.)

The style in the dialogues in this work is also devoid of Sanskrit words, but elevated to suit the general style of the book. This is how the immortal queen (Laksmi) speaks:

"pīṭar ovun hora pāraval maṅgin āvit apaṭa kiṭṭu karannayi hadanne. oya varin vara eliya penenne mansandhivalaṭa pāmīna, apa giya ata piya saṭahan maṅgin parikṣā karana nisayi. mē vīdiyaṭa giyot ovunaṭa asu novī apaṭa vāḍi dura yannaṭa lābenne nāhā. ē nisa metān siṭa, mama asu

vihuduvannam. ko? rēns mā atata dennāyi'kiyamin vijaya siri atin pragrahaya nāvata ganimin..."(1.)

(Peter, they are trying to come by secret paths. The light you see from time to time is when they come to junctions, they inspect our steps to find out the direction we took. If we keep on like this we won't be able to go far before they catch us. I will, therefore lead the horse from here, let me have the reins.' Saying thus she took the reins from Vijayasiri and..)

Laksmi speaks a refined language. It is not the common conversational style. But Silva makes her use the English word 'reins' which seems quite inept in the context. Sometimes in the dialogue Silva mixes colloquial expressions with 'polished' conversational style, as seen in the following example:

"'mahatmayā, kō-mahatmayā lakṣmī? ā ko? mē mā siṭinne kohēdāyi'? hetema mahallā pilivisiyeya.
'āyi Piṭar, obata pissuda? lakṣmiya gāna apa dannā ulavva mokada? āya rāgena giyē oba novāyi? mahallā kiye-ya." (2.)

('Sir, where is Laksmi? Where is she? Where am I now?' he asked the oldman.

'Why, Peter, are you crazy? How the hell do we know where Laksmi is? Was it not you who took her?', the old man answered')

Here, when the old man asks 'Why, Peter are you crazy?' Silva uses the colloquial idiom, except the word 'obata'; in

(1.) Laksmi p.366

(2.) ibid. p.436

the common usage this word is not used but a word like 'umbata' or 'oyata' instead. The most interesting word here is 'ulavva' (a disaster, death etc.,) which is heard when somebody speaks irritatedly or curses someone or something. Here, Silva mixes it with grammatically moulded words. In general usage we would hear this sentence in the form 'Laksmi gana api danna ulavvak' na'. (Compare Silva's sentence 'Laksmiya gana apa danna ulavva mokada?')

As the style in Laksmi is characterized by the abundance of Sanskrit words, the style in Radalapiliruva, a late novel, is characterized by the frequent use of English words and derivations from English. Sometimes without trying to mould the English word to suit the Sinhalese idiom he uses it as it is:

"mē kehemmal dumriya hāmatānāma sayiding gahanavā"(p.127)
(This damn train keeps going into sidings.)

"ātamek ohu ganjā āllīmaṭa vesvalā yana āksayis niladhā-
riyaku yayida sitūha"(p.123)

(Some people thought that he was a disguised excise officer going to catch Marijuana sellers)

"Tablat devana pandam eliyat"(p.128)

(The torch light of the man who gives the 'tablet.')

"laggejaya laṅga haṇḍa talamin gād baḍubāvana hāṭida
balāgana"(p.128)

(Having a look at the guard who was yelling as he supervised the unloading at the luggage bay).

(*) The 'staff' for railway working.

"gramafonayen dena kandoskiriya haṇḍa-basiriya hon
haṇḍa"(p.129)

(The irritating noise from the gramophone-the noise of the
horn of the buses.)

"ohugē Kamisayat, tayigāṭayat, pāvahan yuvala hā mēs
kuṭṭamat, felt toppiyat itāma obinā devalya"(p.132)

(His shirt, tie, foot wear and socks, and felt hat went
very well with the rest of...)

There are a great number of English words in the language
of Radalapiliruva as seen in the examples above. Some of these
words are used for articles and objects which are new in
Sinhalese society and for which there are no Sinhalese words,
e.g. Tablet, Gramophone, Bus, Tie, Felt etc. Sometimes Silva
coins new words for the English words. For example:

"unnāmayen pahata bāsa"(p.130)

(Descending by the lift)

"kēṭarayakuṭa, (to a Caterer), ṭāṅkiyakin (from a tank)(p.
294)

"ansaswaraya"(key note)(p.59), akarnadharava(without a
steersman)(p.82)"paryuksanaya"(spray)(p.112).

Among these new words, 'ṭāṅkiya' and 'keṭaraya' are
derived from the English words 'tank' and 'caterer'. The for-
mer word is in common usage today while latter is used only
rarely. The English word 'porter' is taken into Sinhalese
as 'potaraya', and in the same way Silva has coined the word
'ketaraya'. Other examples like 'unnamaya', 'ansaswaraya'
and 'paryuksanaya' show that he attempted sometimes to coin
entirely new words.

In the historical novels of Silva, he uses a stylised

form of language, especially in the dialogues, in order to create an illusion of the relevant time. These classical forms of language, though they are significant in those particular novels, are not so important in the general language of Sinhalese fiction.

Kalahanda, as we have seen involves characters from rural areas; because of this the author had to employ the speech of villagers in this novel. Let us consider one example:

"sīye, sīye, man mehe-man mehe, 'mese haṇḍagāmin Mālinī

vahā senaga mādin diva gos umatuven men āya soyā āvi-
dina mahallāge atin allā gattāya.

'uṃbaṭa mona yakek vāhilada? uṃba kohē makabā vunāda ban?
yanu ekenehima mahallāge kaṭin piṭavū kopabharita pras-
naya viya.

'maṭa vāhunu yakek nāhā, man metanayi hiṭiye, yakā vāhila
tiyenne sīyaṭayi.'

'man mē koyi velē hiṭanda, hāmatānama hoyanavāne; hūna
kiyannā vagē kivvā nēda, laṅgin helavenna epayi kiyala;
uṃba mē hitapu tānama nohiṭa mona deyyanne kāriyaka
giyāda?

(Grandad, Grandad, I am here, I am here,' Saying this
Malini ran through the crowds and took the old man by
hand who was looking for her like a mad man.

'What devil has possessed you? Wherever did you go?'

This irritated question came out of the mouth of the old
man at once.

'No devil has possessed me. It must be you, grandad who
is possessed by a devil'

'What a long time I have been looking for you, I was
looking everywhere. Didn't I tell you, like the saying
of the lizard, not to move away from me? On what god's
errand did you go like this, without staying where you

were?)

The tone of the expressions as well as words such as 'man mehe' 'ban' and 'makabavunada' are taken from the speech of the villagers. And expressions such as 'mona yaka vahilada' and 'mona deyyanne kariyaka giyada' can be pointed out as typical of the colloquial Sinhalese.

Different characters speak different types of language in Silva's novels. In the example above we hear the speech of the villagers; whereas the following example represents Sinhalese spoken by the Moslems in Ceylon:

"miṣṭa Rafayal taraha venna epā, onna ēkaṭa magē vaif ēka, man kiyana hāṭi tamayi ahanavā. epayi kivvot geyin piṭa aḍiya tiyannē nē. dōṭar ēka vunat hadanna ōna ehema tamayi. man dākka edā miṣṭa rafāyalge dōṭar ekayi vaif ekayi ara gōlfes piṭṭaniye vasa naraka minissu ekka katākara kara innavā. ēka narrakayi".(1.)

(Don't be displeased Mr. Raphael, now take my wife, she always obeys my word. If I ask her not to, she would not even take one step out of the house. This is the way that a daughter too should be brought up. I saw, the other day, Mr. Raphael, your wife and daughter, talking with some very vicious men in the Galle Face Park. That is very bad.)

But W.A. Silva follows this method only occasionally. Often he follows the conventional style which was popular at his time. This artificial language could be easily used to present lifeless, puppet-like characters. The creating of

emotionally charged, individual characters was not W.A. Silva's aim. He was, to some extent, a moral novelist, though he wrote sentimental stories full of such things as crime, detection, mystery etc. Although these stories cannot be considered as good novels his style is much appreciated due to its straightforwardness, variety, lucidity and paucity of grammatical mistakes.

To end the discussion on W.A. Silva's novels, I propose to consider some ideas he has expressed about the novel in some of his works. The following two excerpts will show the attitude of Sinhalese society towards the novel and Silva's own understanding of it:

"I tell you Sara, he said, 'they say that there are no worse books written in this age than novels. Everybody is agreed that mankind will be ruined if such books are allowed to fall into the hands of young men and women.'"

'What do they contain? asked Sara who believed that nothing could be written but sermons.

'What does it matter if they contain sermons?, you silly woman, the trouble is that they contain every thing in the world but sermons. You find in them all the wicked things in the world.'

'Alas! why do they have them printed like religious books then?'

'That is the whole trouble, don't you see? If any of those books happen to fall into the hands of a growing girl she would be ruined, she would come to know everything that she should not know.'(1.)

(1.) Silva, W.^A. Deyyanne Rate. Colombo. 1927. p.18

(Translation: Saratchandra, Sinhalese Fiction. p.38)

This indicates the true attitude of the ordinary Sinhalese people towards the novel; which we can believe to be true because there are some people still alive who remember having been punished for reading Sinhalese novels both at home and school. This is what W.A. Silva himself thought about the novel:

"The benefit of novel reading is unlimited. There are various novels, such as those written on important human experiences for the betterment of the people, those which are enjoyable, and the humorous ones (which are still wanting in our literature.) There are historical as well as realistic ones. The service expected from these various kinds of novels is enormous.....The true novelist is a great poet and his task is not the mere forming of four lines to a metre but it is such that he explains the consciousness of man and he should not be engaged in laying down rigid rules."(1.)

As is seen in this instance Silva wanted to develop Sinhalese fiction with various types. He regards the lack of a comic novel as a great loss to his nation. Perhaps that is why he wrote a novel like Radala Piliruva, though he took the plot from Moliere. Some of his short stories are also humorous. Although he knew about psychological and realistic novels he has not tried to create them. He attacked those Sinhalese novelists who wrote realistic novels saying that their art was not different from the art of the entries in police records.(2.) Apparently he aimed this attack at the novels of Martin Wickramasingha.

{1.} Silva W.A. Radalapiliruva. p.43.
 {2.} See the introduction to the fifth edition of Siriyalata.

Martin Wickramasingha (b.1891) Towards Modernity.

Among the Sinhalese novelists of the first half of this century Martin Wickramasingha is undoubtedly the most significant writer as regards the variety of his work, the quality and the impact on other writers. The first four of his novels, *Lila* (1914), *Soma* (1920), *Airangani* (1923) and *Sita* (1923) are similar to the popular fiction of that time. An interesting feature in these works is that though they present a romantic, commonplace love story, they also propagate, some ideas which were quite new in Sinhalese literature and which were against the ideas of Piyadasa Sirisena, the most prominent novelist at the time. New ideas about the theory of evolution, morals, the liberation of women, civilization, culture etc., which Wickramasingha had learnt by reading English books and also his own independent ideas about the culture of the Sinhalese people and Buddhism are expressed through the characters in these novels.(1)

Miriṅguva (The Mirage)(1925) shows some of the first signs of Wickramasingha breaking away from the typical Sinhalese fiction and contemplating writing serious novels. In the prefatory note to this novel he says 'the motive of the novel is 'representing life'. He observes further, that the novelists should not instruct, amuse or preach; and this can be

(1.) See V.Hapuaracci: 'Martin Wickramasinghage Navakata Saha Ketikata Vicaraya' Maharagama. 1961. pp.51-58.

taken as a criticism of the contemporary Sinhalese novelists. At this early age of the Sinhalese novel it is quite admirable to find this author emphasising the realistic portrayal of life as the most important aspect of the novel. In his introduction to the second edition of this work (1950) Wickramasingha claims Miringuva as the best of all his early works. The different method of the depiction of character in this novel may be taken as the main reason for considering it a significant work of the time. The heroine, Molly, is different from the common romantic heroine. She is the type of character a writer like Sirisena would never dream of depicting. She faces a sad death which seems inevitable under the circumstances. Molly is independent, vulnerable to the feelings of her mind and is led towards committing suicide as a result of frustration, fear and suspicion. Her bourgeois parents crave to be fully westernized. Through their life Wickramasingha satirises this particular sector of Sinhalese society and attempts to maintain a theory that the Sinhalese culture would never be successfully mixed with the western culture.

The plot in this novel indicates that Wickramasingha has been greatly influenced by some English and Russian novelists. In his thesis, Tilakaratna compares Miringuva with Tolstoy's Anna Karenina in detail.(1) Following the change of the subject

(1.) Tilakaratna, M.P. Russian Literature & the Modern Sinhalese Novel and Short Story. Colombo.1969. pp.113/116.

and the new dimension in the portrayal of the character, the style in this work has been changed too, but very slightly. The descriptions of nature, places and persons are composed in a style similar to that in his previous novels which is largely inspired by the classical Sinhalese prose. Only the dialogues are written in modern conversational idiom.

Rohini(1929) is the only historical novel of Wickramasingha. This novel gained considerable popularity due to lively descriptions of the life and wars of king Dutthagamani, the greatest hero of the Sinhalese Buddhists. As Saratchandra has pointed out there is nothing very interesting in the character in this novel, but what is interesting is the story itself. Further he observes that the plot in Rohini is comparable with that in Sabatini's Scaramouche.(1)

Gamperaliya (The Changing Village), which is the first of a trilogy, was published in 1944, marking a new direction in the Sinhalese novel. In this novel we find Wickramasingha continuing with his progressive ideas about the nature of the novel which he seems to have been developing ever since the writing of Miringuwa. The two other parts of the trilogy, Yugantaya(The End of an Era) and Kaliyugaya (The Kali Era) were published in 1949 and 1957 respectively. In this trilogy of novels Wickramasingha tries to present the decline of a particular social system and the subsequent rise of another.

(1.) See Saratchandra, 'Sinhala Navakata'. p.85

In Gamperaliya through the families of Nanda and Piyal we see the traditional rural culture being replaced by the new commercialism. Piyal, the symbol of the new society, marries Nanda, the daughter of a dying family. In Kaliyugaya we read about the life of these two in Colombo, where they try to conform with modern westernized society, how they break the few remaining links with the village. Yugantaya tells the story of the children of Nanda and Piyal. In this story the writer shows how the new capitalist class is eventually oppressed by the working class. In fact, this has not yet happened in Ceylon. He must have, through his experiences about the clashes between the capitalist and working classes soon after the second world war, tried to predict the possibility of a future victory of the working classes.

A striking comparison has been made by Tilakaratna, of Gamperaliya with Chekhov's Cherry Orchard; of Yugantaya with Turgenev's Fathers and Sons and Gorky's Forma Gordeyev. Tilakaratna assumes that most of the similarities are possibly accidental and not deliberate imitations. He further observes that the social conditions of both Wickramasingha and these Russian novelists were quite similar and that this may be the reason for the similarities in their novels. This argument seems unacceptable because it is difficult to believe that the social conditions in Russia in the late nineteenth

(1.) See Tilakaratna, op.cit. p.113.

century and Ceylon in the early twentieth century were similar, though there were some elements of dissatisfaction about the prevailing systems and hopes for a new one in both the societies. What we can easily and more reasonably believe is that Wickramasingha had great admiration for and inspiration from the works of these Russian novelists.

Besides, we can think of another source of inspiration for Wickramasingha's trilogy, for example, 'Buddenbrooks' by Thomas Mann. Despite many similarities in plot and characters in Buddenbrooks and Wickramasingha's work we must realize, at the outset, that the visions of the two authors are contradictory. Buddenbrooks gives the true conviction of Mann, his belief in the old bourgeois way of life. It concerns the three generations of merchants in a German town, and this family of merchants resemble Mann's own. The time is after 1830s, the period during which free trade and open market flourished in Germany. The first generation of Buddenbrooks make money by attending strictly to business. The second generation represented by Thomas Buddenbrooks allow the necessity to make money to diminish. He builds an expensive new house and marries a girl mainly for her beauty, not for a big dowry as his predecessors used to do. With the third generation, with the birth of Johann, who is not interested in trade at all, who is very sensitive to music the family and traditions of Buddenbrooks break up. With the decline of the Buddenbrooks family, we see the emergence of another family

through success in business.(1.)

By contrast with Buddenbrooks, in Wickramasingha's trilogy too we find the story of three generations of the same family. Some of the main characters in Buddenbrooks, Consul Buddenbrooks, Frau consul, Tony, Thomas and Christian remind us of Muhandiram Kaisaruvatte, Matara Hamine, Nanda, Piyal and Tissa respectively. Wickramasingha's description of the Sinhalese Newyear festival at Mahagedara resembles Mann's description of Christmas at Buddenbrook's (See p.71. Buddenbrooks. Penguin.) Matara Hamine's and Nanda's family pride is the same as that of Frau Consul and Tony. Herr Grunlich's approaches to marry Tony are similar to Piyal's advances towards Nanda. An interesting similarity can be seen in the way the two family houses are used as symbols in the two stories. For example:

"That old house could not be repaired without spending a lot of money. The house was about two hundred years old. Piyal, being intelligent, knew that one could not renovate it even by spending two or three thousand Rupees on it."

'My mother will not leave the house even if a part of it should collapse. At least we must have it renovated for them.'(2)

In this instance Nanda and Piyal discuss the dilapidated family house. Nanda understands the strange, but natural love

(1.) For an interesting analysis of this work, see *The Novel and the World's Dilemma*, by Burgum, E.B. New York. 1963. pp.50/53.

(2.) Gamperaliya. 1948. fourth edition. pp.208/209

of her mother for 'Mahagedara', but Piyal does not; as he sees it as a businessman, it is only a waste of money to repair that house. In the following example from Buddenbrooks we see the feelings of Tony, when Thomas suggested selling their family house:

"Our consent', she repeated after a pause, sadly, and rather bitterly as well. 'Dear me, Tom, you know you will do whatever you think best-the rest of us are not likely to withhold our consent for long. But if we might put in a word - to beg you' she went on, almost dully, but her lip was trembling too-'the house-Mother's house - the family home, in which we have all been so happy! We must sell it?"

"The senator shrugged his shoulders again! 'Child, you will believe me when I tell you that I feel everything you can say, as much as you do yourself. But those are only our feelings; they aren't actual objections. What has to be done remains the problem. Here we have this great piece of property-what shall we do with it? For years back, ever since father's death, the whole back part has been going to pieces...."(1.)

Tony looks at the house just as Nanda and her mother look at their family house. They would like to protect it despite nature and poverty. Like Piyal, Thomas too thinks not of the significance of the house as a family symbol but about the amount of money they have to spend in vain.

In a longer and closer examination of the two works we would be able to see more reflections of Buddenbrooks in Gamperaliya and its two sequels. However, such a long discussion

would be inappropriate in the scope of our study.

Viragaya (1956)(Free from Passion), is the most celebrated work of Wickramasingha. The influence of this work on subsequent Sinhalese novelists has been so substantial and also harmful to their creative talent that one Sinhalese critic has felt compelled to state that 'the Sinhalese novel began with Gamperaliya and ended with Viragaya'.(1.) Aravinda, the protagonist in Viragaya has been subjected to a number of analyses and criticisms creating a great interest in that character. The plot is developed and presented from the first person point of view. Aravinda relates his emotional experiences from three aspects; i.e. his relations with his family, his love affair with Sarojini, and his relations with Bati. Aravinda speaks as if he has conquered common human feelings such as love, hatred, remorse etc., but through these actions and other incidents the reader sees he still has all these feelings and is suffering from them. A clear image of Aravinda is not created in the novel; but the intricacy in his life makes it deep, human and interesting. We cannot expect a novelist to give us a crystal clear picture of life, as the reality is not itself clear and beautiful. Most of the critics of Viragaya quarrel with the author for the contradictions, ambiguous elements and repetitions in Viragaya. When we probe deep into our minds we can see how difficult it is to give

(1.) De Silva, Cristy. 'Sinhala Navakata, Viragaya saha Muladharmā,' n.d. Colombo.p.38.

nicely finished, clear cut pictures of life.

This is the first time Wickramasingha has dealt with the problems of the modern younger generation with particular attention to their psychology. In rural Sinhalese society, most of the middle class families are similar to that of Aravinda. The father, whether a newly prosperous merchant, a rich farmer, or an Ayurvedic doctor who is respected by the poor, wishes to give an English education to his son and to see him enter upper society as a Doctor, Lawyer or a Civil Servant. The son usually does not fulfill the father's hope. While doing a mediocre job, he starts to fall in love with girls, finds that all kinds of trifles trouble him and behaves in a peculiar way, disregarding society and eventually becomes disinterested in life. These are the common features in many novels written after Viragaya; and this is what was happening in the life of many young people with a knowledge of English and other new subjects. They find themselves floating between two worlds, the traditional culture and the values of the new society. Like Aravinda they think that they have severed links with the tradition, and are modern, revolutionary and radical. When faced with real problems they realize that they have not really absorbed the new values. Analysing the character of Aravinda, Saratchandra saw that this was a sickness that most of the younger generation were suffering from; hence he aptly remarked, 'a bit of Aravinda is seen in every one of us'.(1.)

The characteristics of the heroes of the Sinhalese novel after Viragaya can be best interpreted as the outcome of serious thinking about contemporary Sinhalese society as well as awareness of world literature. Tilakaratna, however, regards these characters, including Aravinda, as reminiscent of the pre-revolutionary Russian novel. He points out that the heroes of these Russian novels too are sensitive, broody, seeking refuge in imagination and often troubled over trifles. Here we can agree with Tilakaratna only partly, because heroes of these characteristics are found not only in the Russian novel, but also in the novels of many other modern literatures. Whatever may be the primary source of inspiration, Viragaya is a work of art.

When we consider the style in the novels of Wickramasingha we must not forget the fact that his art has grown with his style. The character, plot, structure and every other aspect of the novel has a vital dependence upon the language and style of the novelist. Despite the basic flexibility of the language, which is common to all the writers in that language it is the personality and talent of a particular writer which gives life to the language of his novel, and gives it an individual style. When the novelist follows and imitates others, or writes about commonplace things, the possibilities of the development of such a style are quite small. In the early fiction of Wickramasingha, as we have mentioned before, influence from other contemporary writers is reflected in the

subject matter as well as the style.

Saratchandra, nevertheless, says that even in his first novel, *Lila*, Wickramasingha has employed the spoken idiom; and that it had been a successful experiment.(1.) It is true that Wickramasingha has used a style mixed with words from ordinary speech, but only in dialogues. As we have already seen, this is not a new experiment by Wickramasingha, as it had been done by almost all the writers of fiction at that time. The use of ordinary speech in Wickramasingha's novels has been discussed by Hapuaracci, too:

"Having realized the ineptitude of the ancient literary language for modern purpose Martin Wickramasingha, like some other writers, attempted to employ the day-to-day speech, which is closer to the experiences of the people than the former. Thus, these radical writers perceived that they could use the ordinary speech effectively in dialogues and situations and eventually in characterization, too." (2.)

This is only an affirmation of Saratchandra's opinion but not the full truth. What we see in these novels is a distorted form of the idiom of speech. It would be interesting to learn why the early Sinhalese novelists wanted to mould the idiomatic speech. Hapuaracci thinks this tidying up of the speech "removes the simplicity and obscenity (gramyatvaya) in ordinary speech and perfects its syntax". If these have

(1.) Saratchandra, op. cit. p.80

(2.) Hapu Aracci, V. p.184

been the real intentions of those novelists, their efforts should be considered senseless, because the simplicity and the special syntax are the most fascinating features in ordinary speech and can be used to create wonderful effects in the novel. The term 'gramya laksana' (obscene elements) is ambiguous, because if we take it in the ordinary sense of the words we are implying that nothing decent and polite can be expressed through ordinary speech, but only obscenities. As this is not, evidently, the case, we can assume what is meant by this term here is the particular characteristics in ordinary speech which are not governed by the traditional grammar. These features are not of course, literally 'obscene'. In Sinhalese there are several types of ordinary speech, too. The speech of, for instance, educated and sophisticated circles is different from that of the uneducated, common man. In an analysis of the conversational language in the Sinhalese novel we can find that the speech of the common man has mostly been moulded according to the speech of sophisticated speakers. Ironically, though the latter too is not governed by the traditional grammar, it was never considered by Sinhalese novelists as full of 'vulgar elements'.

Martin Wickramasingha himself holds a similar view about the use of ordinary speech in the novel:

"There are various contradictory views on the language of dialogue among critics and readers. Some of them believe that the language of labourers and villagers should be employed in the same way as they use it. This

view is based on an obsolete idea. The structure of the good novel is the final and natural result of all its components, including language. To use a different mode of language from that of the general narrative style in a novel could be an obstacle to the harmony of the novel."(1.)

In the examples to be quoted from Wickramasingha's novels we can see how he has 'purified' ordinary speech so as not to 'disturb the harmony' of the novel, and how far he has used ordinary speech in its real form.

Though Wickramasingha established himself as a major figure in a number of fields in Sinhalese literature, he has equally become known for the abundance of unidiomatic, confusing and ambiguous elements in his language. At first we must admit the fact that when a writer experiments with the language trying to develop its power of expression, he has to invent new terms, new structures, new patterns and new words; which would naturally seem unidiomatic. The idiom of a language is not a stable, unchangeable thing. A change, evolution or innovation in the language of fiction should serve a literary purpose, but it should not be inappropriate for the form of the novel and should not create ambiguities.

Wickramasingha's innovations have been criticised by some Sinhalese critics as leading to confusions.(1.) Consider

(1.) Wickramasingha, Martin. Vimansa. Vol.4. pp.18/19

(2.) See: i. W.A.Silva. Kataratnakaraya. The introduction to the second edition. 1958.
 ii. Pallevaala, R. Viragalokaya. Colombo.1963
 iii. Sugatadasa, K.B. Upandasita Wickramaya.Colombo.1963

the following examples:

i. kuḍā pittala kalavala hāḍahurukama āti, kaluvara lī kakul satarin usulāgat, almāriyehi pahala taṭṭuvehi rāmuvaḍa kaluvara līyen karana laddaki.'

ii. ātulu pāṭten dora deka allā gat pittala asav tuḍu hāra anik kisi piriddīmak, vivarayak ē almāriyehi noviya. (Gamperaliya.p.50)

iii. 'havas varuvehi āvidina his godak nisā aturu siduru nāti ē kaḍapalin nikmennē...' (Gamperaliya.p.59)

iv. 'taraha venna epā Nandā, ē vacana mama adahas karala kivve nāhā.' (Gamperaliya.p.253)

v. 'ammā āḍambara venna epā. anunṭa dos kiyamin api ahan-kāra venne kumaṭada? ē gāni adahas karala āvit ahankāra-kam pennu nisayi maṭa taraha āve.' (Yugantaya.p.151)

vi. 'konḍaya bāṇḍi chu laṅga siti kanappuva uḍavū usa kalu toppiya ohuge vikaṭa āṇḍume silumina viya.' (Viragaya.p.28)

(i. The almirah was held up by four ebony legs shaped like small brass pots. Its lower part too was made of ebony wood.

ii. Except for the two brass hinges that grasped its two doors from inside, there was not a single joint or cleavage to be seen.

iii. In the afternoon, from that street which is packed with a walking heap of heads, what one could hear is.....'

iv. 'Please don't be cross Nanda, I didn't say those words deliberately.'

v. 'Mother, don't be proud. Why should we be proud and blame others? I got irritated because that woman came just on purpose to show us her pomposity.'

vi. He had tied his hair in a knot, and the tall, black hat which was on the small table standing beside his, was the climax of his mock costume.')

In the above examples the phrases, 'lī kakul satarin usulagat', 'dora deka alla gat' and 'langa siti kanappuva'

are entirely new in Sinhalese idiom and they sound odd to the native speaker. The past participles 'usulagat', 'alla gat' and 'siti' are generally used with an animate subject. Although these types of participles have occasionally been used with animate subjects in the classical poetic language, this is hardly ever used in modern usage. Wickramasingha is very fond of this type of writing. For instance whenever he wants to say 'the picture is hanging from the wall', he writes 'pin-turaya bittiye elli siti' whereas the usual idiomatic verb is either 'tibe' or 'ata'. In example ii, the phrase 'avidina his godak nisa' is an inappropriate figure of language; which is again typical of Wickramasingha. Usually, in Sinhalese, referring to a great crowd of people, one would say 'ekama hisgodak vage' (like a heap of heads), but if we say 'avidina his godak' the sense and image it conveys becomes ambiguous and awkward. Because a 'walking heap of heads' reminds us only of a street of ghosts, not of human beings.

If we consider the phrases 'adahas karala kivve naha' (I didn't mean to say that) 'adahas karala avit' (having come on purpose) in examples iv and v, we can see how Wickramasingha creates new phrases in Sinhalese by translating English words unthoughtfully. In spoken Sinhalese one could quite easily express the sense 'doing some thing on purpose' in such utterances as 'hitala', 'hita mata', 'ona kamin' or by 'ibema' 'nikamma' etc., with a negative. Instead of any of these Wickramasingha coins 'adahas karala' which serves no particular

purpose in the context.

The following examples are from Gamperaliya wherein the dialogue is used often to depict situation and character interestingly and dramatically. Let us consider first how the conversations are imbued with the colour of the regional idiom of the south of Ceylon:

"tāttāge kalpanāva tiune iskōle mahattayā perakadōru mahattayek karanna"

"uṃba kohomada danne?"

"eyālāyi tāttā indeddi ehema kivva"

"uṃba ekkada"

"mama ekka nevi. tāttā mārune nātnam perakadōruvek venna igena ganna tiunā yayi iskole mahattayā davasak kivva."(1)

('His father hoped to see the school master become a proctor')

'How do you know?'

'His father said so when he was living.'

'To you?'

'No, not to me, the school master said one day that he could have studied to become a proctor if his father hadn't died')

"mē gollat ilandārikam valaṭa udav denavā" yi kiyamin mātura hāmine, sināsena taruna katunṭa dosnāguvāya.

"pansalaṭa āvāya kiyā apaṭa hinā novī inna āhaka?" yi kiyū Anula Baladāsa desa balā iṅgi māruvāya.

"hināvena eka pavda?"

"ēkaṭa uttara labāganna ōna oya ilandāri gānungenmayi" Piyalge mava uttara dunnāya.(2.)

(1.) Wickramasingha, Martin. Gamperaliya. Colombo.1948. fourth edition.p.44

(2.) ibid. p.158.

1,000,000 ('These (girls) also join in the amusements of these youths', said Matara Hamine, blaming the girls who were laughing.

'Can we stop laughing because we have come to a temple? Anula replied winking at Baladasa.

'Is it a sin to laugh?'

'You must get the reply to that from those young women' replied Piyal's mother.)

This is ordinary speech with a slight 'polishing' as seen in 'tiunā yayi' and 'āvāya kiyā'. The words such as 'eyālāyi', 'nevi', 'tiuna', 'āvāya', 'āhaka' and 'ilandāri gānu' should be noted as characteristic of the southern idiom.

The following dialogue is taken from Gamperaliya which also is based on the speech of the south and illustrates the author's deliberate use of dialogue to create dramatic situations. Here the two characters concerned are Nanda's parents. Wickramasingha presents the dialogue in such a way that we feel as if we are listening to the actual speech of the characters:

"maṭat kiyanna mataka nāti unā rālahāmiṭa kāranayak;
Piyal katirinā ata yōjanavak karala evā tiuna'.

'yojanavak'

'ovu' - Nandā gāna'

'Nandāgāna Piyal yojanavak karalā evā tiuna?'

'ovu'

'unṭa kavuda hira denne?'

'mamat ehema tamayi kivve' (Gamperaliya.p.61)

('I too forgot to tell you something, Ralahami; Piyal has made a proposal through Katirina'.

'A proposal?'

'Yes, a proposal, about Nanda'

'Piyal has made a proposal about Nanda?'

'Yes'

'Who would give their daughters to such people?'

'That's what I said too')

Here the words are natural as well as full of drama. When Matara Hamine ('Nanda's mother) tells the Muhandiram (Nanda's father) about Piyal's proposal he gets irritated. His anger, disapproval and hostile attitude towards Piyal is implied by the repetition of the same ideas and the crucial expression 'unta kavuda hira denne' (who would give their daughters to such people?) which the reader has heard several times before from Matara Hamine. The expression 'hira denne' (to give in marriage) is again very typical of the southern idiom. The deliberate or accidental modification of the natural speech according to the written language can be seen in such phrases as 'Katirina ata (spoken language: katirina ate) and 'karala eva' (spoken language: karala evala). In the following example from Kaliyugaya this feature of mixing speech with 'elevated terms' may be further examined:

"Allan ehema kiyā nāhā'yi Tissa kiya.

'mama hitanne naha, Nandage hita dannavā Allan Airin āssāraya karanu valakvanṭa tadin kriyākala eka vāradibava'.

'api kale varadak ya'yi kavādāvat hituvet nāha'.

'mehi āvāṭa passe'yi Tissa tepalēya'.(1.)

(1.) Wickramasingha, Martin. Kaliyugaya. Maharagama.1957.p.27

('Allan hasn't said so', Tissa said.

'I don't think, so. Nanda, you know according in your heart that it was unfair to object to strictly to Allan's relationship with Irine.

'We never thought that we were doing wrong.'

'After coming here', Tissa said.)

In the above sentences the words and terms, 'kiya' instead of 'kiyala', 'assaraya karanu valakvanta' for 'assaraya karana eka valakvanta', 'kale varadak ya'yi' for 'kale varadak kiyala' and 'mehi' instead of 'mehe' can be pointed out as examples of Wickramasingha's tendency to mix the spoken language with the written language.

In the following examples from Gamperaliya similar instances of attempts to mould the spoken language can be seen:

"laṅgadi eccara mudalak lābēyayi hitanna bāhā."

'Anulage rattaran baḍuvat ukas tiyā salli ṭikak gannavā misa vena monava karannada?' (Gamperaliya.p.69)

('It's quite unlikely that we can get such an amount of money soon.'

'Then we'll have to get some money by pawning Anula's golden ornaments. What else can we do?')

"Vijeta mataka nādda Piyal Nandaṭa aṇḍunak kāvime katāva? anduna Kattirina lava kavanna atayi saka karanna ati. dan ē gāni Piyal ekka hoṇḍaṭa yālu nisā ayit monavāvat kavā-viya kiyā baya āti." (Gamperaliya.p.179)

('Vije, don't you remember a rumour about Piyal giving a charm to Nanda? They must have suspected that the charm was given to Nanda through Kattirina. As she is now very friendly with Piyal they think that he might try to give her another charm.')

In these examples the distortion of the rhythm and tone of ordinary speech in order to elevate it to the standard of the written language is clearly seen. If we consider the words 'labeyayi', 'Anulage', 'tiya', 'Nandata', 'kavime', and 'atayi' we may find this is not how they actually occur in spoken language. The terms 'labeyayi', 'tiya' and 'atayi' appear as 'labeyi'kiyala', 'tiyala' and 'ati kiyala'. The names Anulage and Nandata are not uttered in actual speech with elongated 'e' and 'a'.

This kind of modification of the language in dialogue cannot be taken as a serious defect in the novel. The abundance of such a mixed form of language may however damage the naturalness of the characters and situations.

In Viragaya, unlike in the other novels of Wickramasingha, we can find some instances of using the speech of the characters without modification and learned words. For example:

"Sara Siridāsaṭa kāmāti nā neva' yi kumak kiva yutuda' yi sitāgata nohāktivū mama kīvemi.

'kāmāti nāti bava Aravinda danne nāddayi ā tarahayen āsuvāya.

'Sara taraha venṭa epa, ē vacana maṭa nikamma kiyavuna.'
('Sara, you don't like Siridasa, do you?; I asked her, (1.) as I felt confounded.

'Don't you already know that I don't like him' she asked angrily.

'Please don't be cross, Sara, I didn't say those words on purpose')

(1.) Wickramasingha, Martin. Viragaya. Colombo. 1956. p.113

As is already mentioned, in this dialogue the effectiveness is high, due to the naturalness of the words. Without using long descriptions the author draws a vivid picture of Aravinda and Sara in this short dialogue by means of skilfully selected words. Even the tone of the phrases uttered by each person reveals their character. Aravinda's words, 'kamati na nova'(you don't like) and 'Sara taraha venta epa'(Please, don't be cross, Sara) are so natural and appropriate that they indicate his inability to ask Sara something straight out and also the meek nature which caused his recoiling from the problems of life. Unlike Aravinda, Sara takes life as it comes and is going to marry Siridasa though she did not love him as much as she loved Aravinda. Her words, 'kamati nati bava....'(Don't you already know that I don't like him) are so spontaneous that they reveal Sara's straightforward character. Although Virajaya abounds in dialogues which are not modified according to the written language occasional mixture of learned words are to be found in some instances. For example: 'taruniyakata alaya karanne kumana adahasinda?'(Viragaya.p.179)(What is the purpose of loving a girl?) The rest of the dialogue where this phrase comes is natural though the phrase itself is entirely literary or of the written language. Thus we can see that in his later novels Wickramasingha tries less to 'perfect' or mould the spoken language than in his previous novels such as Miringuva and Gamperaliya.

These 'perfections' or mouldings of the natural speech

in the conversational style in Wickramasingha's major novels, are not, however, abundant to the extent of harming the structure seriously. His conversational style is generally based on the idiom of the region and social status of his characters.

The general narrative style in these four novels Gamperaliya, Kaliyugaya, Yugantaya and Viragaya is similar in vocabulary to the current style of journalism but it is experimental, progressive and individual. Since Miringuva, Wickramasingha has begun to break away from the conventional narrative style. In the two sequels to Gamperaliya his style is developed and in Viragaya it becomes more uniform and sensitive than in any of his other works. His experiment has been different from that of W.A. Silva. As we have seen, W.A. Silva also experimented with the language of fiction and tried many styles, but was superseded by the later novelists like Wickramasingha. The reason for Wickramasingha's success and W.A. Silva's failure is probably that the former was more keen on writing realistic novels while the latter stuck to romantic fiction.

Now let us examine a few passages to assess the narrative style of Wickramasingha:

"Nandāṭa haṇḍune diya pirunu rabar bōlayak hadisiyē pipurunak meni. tamā haṇḍanu kāmarayen piṭa siṭinnanṭa āsetiyi biyagat Nanda vahāma tama muhuna koṭṭayehi obā gattaya. koṭṭayehi muhuna obāgat Nandage kaṭin piṭavanne susumak vāni haṇḍak pamani. ehet āge hada tula haṭagat kampanaya hā dedaruma kotekdāyi āgē uḍukaya sālena sāṭiyen Anulāta vāṭahina. kōpaya sansiṇḍīmen haṭagat biya ātiva vaṭa piṭa

bälü Anulāge sitata nāngē dayānukampāvaki."(Gamperaliya. p.166)

(Nanda broke out crying just like the bursting of a rubber ball full of water. She covered her face with a pillow fearing that others would hear her crying. Now only a sound as of sighing could be heard from Nanda. But Anula could see by the trembling of Nanda's chest how terribly her heart has been shocked and shattered. When Anula looked around after her anger was gone, she felt compassion.)

In this passage the first sentence includes an image of bursting rubber ball full of water, which is not clear or effective. But in general the sentences are simple and full of clarity and power. Nanda cries after being scolded by Anula when she refused the malted milk sent by Piyal when she was sick, because of her pride. Anula is hurt about it. She thought that Nanda was only pretending not to like Piyal, as Anula herself was secretly in love with him. Anula's anger is abated at once when she sees how Nanda is sobbing, and suffering.

"sēvakayā minī kāmārayehi dora hāra ivatata vī tamā atehivu pahana kāmārayehi uskota tanana lada pilkada uḍa tibuna malakaṇḍan deka desaṭa hārevvēya. gōni deka tula damanalada kesel kan deka sē dala redi kada dekaka otana lada malakaṇḍan dekehi muhunuḍa his da pahan eliya nisā Nandaṭa penina. eyin eka malakaṇḍaka burusuvaka kalu asva keṇḍi sihikaravana dala ravulakin vāsunu muhuna Nandā vahā hāndina gattāya. ē malakaṇḍa handinagat āgē denetin kaṇḍulu gālū namut ā tama hada tula vū tiyunu vedanāva hā kampanayada dākvena anik piṭattara lakunakudu pahala nokota bittiyata ata gasā gattāya."(Gamperaliya. p.216)

(The attendant after opening the door, drew aside and held the light towards the corpses on the high platform. Then in the

light from that lamp, Nanda could see the faces of those two corpses which were lying there like two bunches of bananas wrapped in two sacks. One of those faces was covered with a beard like the black horse-hair in a brush, and Nanda recognized that face at once. After recognizing that corpse, tears welled up in her eyes, but she did not show any other sign of the sharp pain and agony in her mind but rested her hand against the wall.)

This is how Nanda faced a frightful, unexpected experience. Jinadasa, her first husband, was supposed to have died and she had married Piyal some time later. Suddenly she receives a telegram saying that her husband is taken to hospital at Ratnapura. She thought it might be Piyal and went to see him with his mother. In Gamperaliya the tension in Nanda's mind, and how doubt grew since the moment she received that telegram, is interestingly presented. The reader can correctly guess that it is Jinadasa but not Piyal who is in hospital and so does Nanda, though with much pain. In the above passage we see Nanda discovering herself it was Jinadasa, her first husband, who had died in hospital. The restrained style prepares our mind to face something unexpected. The imagery of the two bunches of bananas and the brush made of horse hair are typical of Wickramasingha's style. He is fond of creating new imagery, though they are not always of functional effectiveness. The image of the rubber ball full of water in the earlier passage may be taken as another example. The last sentence in this passage is noteworthy as the agony, shame and self-control that Nanda experienced at that moment is

effectively expressed in it.

The originality and intricacy in the main character in Viragaya has made its language poetic and sensitive. In Viragaya, Aravinda, the main character, relates his story. Thus the use of the first person has made it easy to develop an individual style. Unlike in his previous works, Wickramasingha has carefully selected poetic expressions and symbols in this novel. For example:

"tāttāṭa magē sitehivū ādaraya aḍu novīya. ehet ohugē kāmārayehi minittu pahak gata kirīma dān nokala hāki kāriyaki. magē sita ekinekaṭa paṭahāni hāngīm gāṭena rana-bimak vanna. tāttā leḍa vūviṭa ohuge ānda laṅgin noselvi siṭāgena sāttukirimaṭa taram anukampāvak mātula haṭagatteya. ugānma maṭa amataka viya. magē pāsāl yahaluvōda magē siten gilihunōya. dān leḍāge kāmārayaṭa yaṇṭa pavā maṭa nositenne kumak nisāda?" (Viragaya.p.94)

(My love for my father has not diminished at all. But it is impossible for me to stay even five minutes in his room now. My mind, where contradictory ideas clash, is like a battlefield. When father first fell ill, I felt that I could attend on him without leaving his bedside. I forgot about my studies and about my school friends, too. But now why don't I feel like even going into the sick room?)

This fast moving, simple style presents us a clear picture of Aravinda's mind. The image of the battlefield suggests not only the confused state of his mind but also the painfulness of those contradictory ideas. The author always pays more attention to the internal conflicts of Aravinda than to his external behaviour. To achieve this aim he employs a style

devoid of ornamental figures of language and pedantic Sanskrit words, which results in a sincere and intimate tone in Aravinda's narration. Consider the following passage:

"āṇḍē vātiri magē kaya nisolman vuvada, sita behevin sa-salaveyi. nidanta vāyam karatma vāhi davasehi poloven 'āvā giyo' piṭa vannak men mage sitaṭa situvili naṅgiyi.' 'Sarat āgē liyumat gāna sitana magē sita vaṭa ravumē duvannaku vāna. vaṭaravumē divīmenma hembatvū mage sita vāgira bāhira aramunu vanasana rāyehi kaluvara āṇ-dura hā ekvaṇṭa yannak men maṭa dānina. nindaṭat non-indaṭat atara lovakaṭa pivisena magē kakulak devarak gāssina. dādi lesa keḍettuvū magē sita ē devarehima mandak sasalava yalit pana adiṇṭa viya." (Viragaya.p.122)

(When I am lying in bed, my body is still but my mind is very confused. When I try to sleep, various ideas rush into my mind just like moths rising from the ground on a rainy day.'

'My mind, when I engage in thoughts of Sara and her letters, is like some one running in a circle. It seemed to me as if my mind, tired of running in a circle, was melting and going to be absorbed in the dark of the night which conceals the external objects of thought. When I fell into a state in between sleep and non-sleep, one of my legs jerked twice. At those times my mind, which was extremely exhausted, quivered slightly and began to gasp.')

Here we see again the depiction of the internal conflict of Aravinda in relation to his physical reactions. The pensive nature of Aravinda grows as the story develops. As most of his relations and friends fail to understand him he turns more and more into his own mind and to the imaginary world created by his mind. What Aravinda thinks as his reality is

seen as a sickness by others. This sickness or inability to face life with common sense and practical attitude is well displayed at the above instance when he struggles in his mind after receiving Sarojini's letter. She suggests that Aravinda should elope with her and marry her as it is impossible to obtain her parents' consent. This sensible suggestion is enough to throw Aravinda into a great mental crisis. He begins to think and worry about the consequences of running away with a girl. As is seen in the above instance these thoughts trouble not only his mind but his body too. The difficulty of sleeping and the jerking of a leg twice indicate Aravinda's nervous disturbance as a result of mental turmoil. Unlike the imagery discussed in the quotations from Gamperaliya, which were inappropriate, the imagery in Viragaya seems to be symbolic and poetic. For instance, the image of 'ava giyo' (the moths) in the passage above, help us to see how all sorts of unpleasant ideas rushed into Aravinda's mind. These particular tiny creatures suddenly appear in great multitudes on rain days, fly a short distance and crawl in all directions and die within minutes after birth. Aravinda's ideas are like these moths appearing in great numbers, crawling and dying soon afterwards. Sometimes Aravinda finds his mind taking the same train of thoughts again and again, just like some one running along a circle. This image also implies Aravinda's inability to achieve peace of mind by thinking of his own problems, which are of course not grave ones to others.

It is this style which is developed to deal with personal problems, especially to expose and analyse the psychological life of the characters, that make Viragaya an important novel. A great number of novels have been written after 1956 which followed the style of Viragaya. The young novelists were fascinated and inspired by both subject and language in Viragaya. Wickramasingha's method of describing mental states of the character has been appreciated by many critics of Viragaya. In the following extract we can examine the use of symbols in this novel:

"aṇḍuru lāgumpala soyana vavulaku men magē sita kāmaraya soyayi. ek dora paluvak hāragena mama kāmarayaṭa ātulu-vīmi. mēsaya uḍa dālvena lāmpuva aṇḍura palavanu saṇḍahā kala saṭanin hembatva aṇḍuraṭa goduru vanṭa yayi. mama lāmpu tiraya ussā eliya vāḍi kalemi. manda velāvakin yalit eliya aḍuviya. telhiṇḍuna pahanāṭa tel damanṭa nositū mama venadāṭa vaḍā kalin nidanṭa situvemi. lāmpu-vehi gini dālla pana adiyi. eya tun varak 'pop' haṇḍa naṅgamin ihala nāṅga hataravana vārayehi aturu dahan viya." (Viragaya. p.187)

(My mind longs for my room like a bat looking for its dark dwellings. I entered the room, opening one half of the door. The lamp on the table was going to be defeated by the dark. I tried to increase the light by raising the wick. But after a moment the light dimmed again. Although oil had run out, I did not want to fill the lamp with oil. I thought I would go to bed earlier than usual. The flame was dying. It flickered three times making a popping sound and disappeared the fourth time.)

Aravinda had been fighting a losing battle with his own mind which is symbolized here as a lamp being defeated after

a fight with the dark. The lamp is exhausted as the oil has run out, and so is Aravinda who is losing his battle with life. The growing problems and mental agony are destroying the last hope of winning. But just one last attempt, he raises the wick of the lamp; no, it would not increase the light, just like the last hope of his life, Bati. She would not understand him and stay with him. After Bati decides to get married to Jinadasa, Aravinda does not feel like reviving any hope for life just as he does not want to fill the lamp with oil. His only refuge is the dark. The word 'andura'(dark) is used three times in this passage, indicating the final sorrowful defeat, and the unhappiness in Aravinda's mind.

Thus Wickramasingha uses meaningful and effective symbols often in this novel. He likes describing atmosphere and nature using new imagery in relation to the situation of the character. The strength of his language achieved by poetry and nuances of meaning shows the extent to which the language of Sinhalese fiction had developed by 1956. The standard of this language is so high that we can assume that it had developed sufficiently to be suitable to write any kind of novel. Through this language a novelist can create a work dealing with the complicated human problems of modern times.

CHAPTER IV

The Contemporary Sinhalese Novel.

The works of some major Sinhalese novelists of the 1950s and '60s will be discussed in the present chapter whom we prefer to call 'contemporaries' rather than 'moderns'. If we consider the definitions of these two terms given by some English critics we will be able to see why we must describe these major Sinhalese novelists as contemporaries. According to some critics of English literature, a novelist need not be a 'modern' simply because he is writing in modern times. Most of the western novelists of the present times are considered as 'contemporaries' but not as 'moderns'. The major Sinhalese novelists of the period after 1944 can also be called 'contemporaries' as they share many similar aspects with the contemporary western novelists. Let us examine the following interpretation of the terms 'modern' and 'contemporary':

"..the word modern is increasingly used to refer to a particular period-i.e., the years between 1900 and 1930-and the kind of writing that flourished at that time. It has, in fact, become another descriptive term, like Augustan Romantic, to be freely used or misused by literary historians. In its broadest sense the Modern Movement was international and embraced all the arts; representative names would include not only Joyce and Eliot, but Proust and Kafka, Schoenberg and Stravinsky, Picasso and Diaghilev."(1.)

(1) Sphere History of Literature in the English Language.Vol.7. The Twentieth century. ed. Bernard Bergonzi. London.1970 p.17.

The modern writer is mostly concerned with aesthetic aspects and individual sensibility while the contemporary is more concerned about social conditions and not greatly interested in artistic innovations. As Stephen Spender thinks, 'The contemporary belongs to the modern world, represents it in his work, and accepts the historic force moving through it, its values of science and progress....The contemporary is involved in conflicts, but fundamentally he accepts the forces and the values of today which are fighting one another, with the same weapons of power, ideology and utilitarian philosophy for different goals'.(1)

The main difference, then, of the contemporary from the modern is that though both are concerned with contemporary society and its values, the latter rejects them. 'The modern is acutely conscious of the contemporary scene, but he does not accept its values. To the modern, it seems that a world of unprecedented phenomena has today cut us off from the life of the past, and in doing so from traditional consciousness. At the same time it is of no use trying to get back into the past by ignoring the present.'(2)

If we think in the light of these observations it will be clear that it is not easy to draw a dividing line between the Sinhalese novelists of the present times as 'contemporaries'

(1) Spender, Stephen. The struggle of the modern. London. 1963 p.77

(2) The struggle of the modern. p.78.

and 'moderns'. But most of the Sinhalese novelists, after Martin Wickramasingha, have been conscious of the contemporary scene in Sinhalese society and also have criticised its values. Due to this fact we can take them as contemporaries though some of them show some aspects of the moderns at the same time since they have also been interested in the aesthetic development of the Sinhalese novel.

The period after 1955 is an extremely prolific era of the Sinhalese novel. This era has witnessed the appearance of a number of good and mediocre novelists, but we will be discussing only the works of the good novelists under the categories 'major contemporaries' and 'modern experimentalists'. Among the major contemporaries, only the works of Gunadasa Amarasekara, K. Jayatilaka and E.R. Saratchandra will be discussed at length in the present chapter, as the space and requirements of our study will not permit a long discussion of such novelists as Madavala Ratnayaka and G.B. Senanayaka. These major Sinhalese novelists are inspired by the great modern novelists of world literature, and they have succeeded in establishing a taste for the serious novel among Sinhalese readers. The experience and understanding of life and reality in contemporary Sinhalese society shown by these novelists are notably wider and subtler than those of their predecessors. Also the works of the contemporary novelists are important.

The experimental moderns are more enthusiastic and ambitious than these major contemporaries in exploring the

medium of the novel. It is these young experimentalists who dominate the Sinhalese literary scene in the 1960s with their experiments in the form and language of the novel to challenge the stagnant state of the novels of the major contemporaries.

In a sense most of the contemporaries too were experimentalists in contrast with the early fiction writers. They have understood the basic requirements and aspects of the modern novel whose chief concern is dealing with the problems and real human situation of their society. Unlike the writers of the early twentieth century they do not intend to entertain the reader with a mere interesting story. Instead they are more concerned with exploring the psychic life of characters and analysing human relationships. Due to these different attitudes of the novelists of the past two decades, the form and the language of the Sinhalese novel have enormously changed and developed.

The appearance of *Karumakkārayo* (*Les Misérables*)(1955) of Gunadasa Amarasekara is of the same significance as that of Wickramasingha's *Gamperaliya* in 1944, in the history of the Sinhalese novel. It was in 1955 that Wickramasingha published his masterpiece, *Virāgaya* (*Dispassion*) which exerted a considerable influence on the contemporary Sinhalese novel. At the time when these two novels, *Karumakkārayo* and *Virāgaya*, were published, the most popular Sinhalese novelist was W.A. Silva whose thrillers and romantic stories were still in great demand. Saratchandra's criticisms of the novels of Piyadasa

Sirisena and W.A. Silva had not yet reached the common Sinhalese reader and even for those few who had read Saratchandra's book there were no alternatives other than the later novels of Wickramasingha.

The early writers of fiction had developed the language to a considerable level and the task of the contemporary novelist was to continue their efforts to improve the flexibility and the sensitivity of the language so as to be suitable to express the experience of the modern age. Although the early writers had occasionally used the natural speech of characters they were mostly dependent on the classical styles and conventional grammar. Some of the contemporary novelists started from where Wickramasingha had developed the language and some of them did not go any further than the level of the style in Viragaya. In the early novels of Gunadasa Amarasekara, K. Jayatilaka and Hemaratna Liyanaracci, a close resemblance to the style of Wickramasingha is to be seen. But they have later succeeded in developing individual styles.

Gunadāsa Amarasekara.(b.1929) Direct influence from the modern western novel.

Amarasekara, who is one of the most popular major contemporary novelists, is also a successful short story writer and a poet. His admiration for and inspiration from the short stories of Chekov was well reflected in his first collection of short stories, 'Ratu Rosa Mala'.(The Red Rose)(1953). In his first novel, Karumakkarayo (Les Miserables) published in

1955, the influence of both the Russian novel and the English novel is to be seen. This novel appeared at a time when the Sinhalese novel was ready for a natural break-through away from popular sensational fiction. However, when it first appeared it was not highly thought of by the Sinhalese reader despite its many important aspects as a novel.

The theme of *Karumakkarayo* is the fate and decline of a village family in south of Ceylon. Wilson, the hero, relates the story. He is the younger son of the family and narrates his sexual relations with the wife of his brother. He gives an account of the family struggle to overcome economic difficulties and their defeat brought about by the injustice of society. The new commercial values are presented as a great power disrupting peaceful human relationships in the village. The sexual conflicts and dissatisfactions are implied to be the real, internal causes affecting the mental sanity and strength of this family. The story is built up around the small hotel which is also the family house. This hotel was opened with a great deal of hope for the future. After some time, the elder brother arrives with his wife to join Wilson and their father to help them with the business. Soon after her arrival, Soma, the brother's wife, begins to dominate the scene. The growing love of Wilson for Soma is presented on a parallel with the flourishing business. Meanwhile, we see how Soma's relationship with her husband deteriorates and also the secret and tactful advances of the father towards her.

Wilson becomes more and more interested and enthusiastic in his work as he enjoys the secret love of Soma, while his brother withdraws to the back of the scene recoiling from both sex and ordinary life. The narrator realizes this fact about his brother though he does not seem to guess the affair between Soma and his father. After some time Wilson's sister and elder brother leave home and go away as they could not stand this situation any longer. The hostility of the neighbours grows and Wilson and his father face a lot of difficulties and troubles. They fail to save their business from ruin and Soma, who is still with them, falls ill. After some time she dies in child birth and Wilson's father sells the only remaining property to the perpetual rival of the family. Now Wilson is alone at home, as his father has gone away soon after Soma's funeral. Then the elder brother and sister return to take Wilson away with them. After listening to his sister and learning about his father's affair with Soma, Wilson gets utterly disillusioned with life and runs away and goes to a forest monastery.

In this novel, quite apart from the influence of some Russian novels we can see some similarities to certain Buddhist stories as well. The author's primary intention seems to be expressing the truth of certain Buddhist teachings, to judge by the end of the story. Another example of Amarasekara's interest in certain Buddhist teachings is the famous stanza he has quoted at the beginning of the novel. This stanza proclaims

that human beings are puzzled and burdened with various internal and external problems. The story in *Karumakkarayo* includes a similar vision. According to the Buddhist stories the only remedy for the problems and sufferings of life is to renounce worldly life, and in the same way Amarasekara too sends Wilson to a monastery in the end. But this novel, on the whole, does not seem to have been written only to point a religious moral. More than any other previous novelist, Amarasekara treats the sexual behaviour of his characters freely and naturally. The portrayal of Soma as an object of strong sexual appeal and the behaviour of all other family members as governed by their individual relations with her show the influence of Freud's ideas.

The language in this novel displays the author's skill in giving interesting descriptions of nature and human behaviour. He presents some pleasant pictures of the countryside and depicts village life in a believable way. Amarasekara has obviously made use of true experiences of his own youth in a village in the south of Ceylon. As he went to school and was brought up in that area he knows both the life and speech of the villagers. But it is only to a small extent that Amarasekara uses the actual idiom and the speech of the villagers in this novel.

The second novel of Amarasekara, *Yali Upannemi* (1960) (*I am reborn*), can be introduced as one of the most revolutionary works by a contemporary. In this work his view of life

is different from that in his first work. The outlook of the theme and the author's ideas clearly show that Amarasekara has been, by this time, greatly influenced by D.H.Lawrence. Lawrence was deeply shocked by the impact of industrialization on the life of his country-men and thought that the best way to achieve the lost beauty and harmony of life is sex. So he dealt with sexual themes quite freely and openly in his novels. Amarasekara too in this novel treats sex as a major power controlling one's life and speaks openly about what had been a closed subject so far in the Sinhalese novel.

The principal character, Ranatunga, tells his story, beginning with his childhood experiences in the village where he was brought up by his mother with too much care. Later he comes to the university and lives in the city where his traditional background clashes with the new values of westernized society. The dominant cause for Ranatunga's dissatisfaction is his peculiar attitude towards love and life. He is romantic and what he expected from the girls with whom he was in love was pure form of love unspoilt by sexual desire. Because of this peculiar attitude he fails in his many love affairs and the next substitute he finds is various mystic meditations and philosophies. After experimenting on his own philosophical idea, Ranatunga goes to India to meet suitable philosophers to discuss his ideas. There also he does not find happiness and comes back to Colombo. Soon afterwards his parents take him home where he marries a girl chosen by them. The details

of this unhappy marriage are given in diary form. As Ranatunga could not find any sexual attraction in his wife he leaves her and comes back to Colombo and lives a carefree life. Soon he becomes completely disillusioned with 'respectable' society and goes to live with the 'underground' society in Colombo. He meets various prostitutes, pimps and pickpockets etc., in whom he finds a frank and honest behaviour which he had never seen in ordinary society. He seems to be obsessed with the idea that he cannot find sexual satisfaction with any woman, but he goes on meeting various harlots until he met Nanda with whom he could be really happy for the first time in his life. A new desire for life is born in Ranatunga who finds a job with the help of a friend and marries Nanda and comes back to a settled 'normal' life.

When we read this novel the most significant feature we find in it is the writer's interest in various eastern and western philosophers. Sometimes one may feel that Amarasekara has written this novel only to prove some ideas gathered from his wide readings of some great philosophers of the world and not to create a novel of good literary qualities. On many occasions he refers to Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Bertrand Russell etc., and Hindu and Buddhist meditations and Yoga methods. Meanwhile in the way he discusses sex and the abnormal behaviour of his characters he reminds us of the novels of D. H. Lawrence. He speaks quite often about a 'holy soul' ('suddhatmaya,'Yali Upannemi.p.199) which could be burnt and through

its ashes one could achieve a new holy soul. These ideas resemble those of Lawrence about the 'phoenix', a mythical bird which consumes itself in a fire and is reborn out of the ashes. Like this bird, Lawrence thought that modern man too should find a way to be born again.(1). In the way Amarasekara describes the sexual act too he seems to be following the bold and frank style of Lawrence. The direct influence of this work, as far as the description of sex is concerned, is Lady Chatterley's Lover.

Amarasekara seems to be a great admirer of Andre Gide as well. There are many events in 'The Immoralist' by Gide which are comparable with incidents in Yali Upannemi. The hero in Gide's work, Michel, is similar to Ranatunga in many ways. Both of them are sensitive and romantic and suffer from some chronic physical illness. They are both from rich families, and both marry the girls proposed by their parents and are unable to have sexual satisfaction with them. Instead they admire the physical vigour and energy in handsome boys. Consider the similarity of these instances:

" The next day I saw a brother of Lassif's; he was a little older and not so handsome; he was called Lachmi. By means of the kind of ladder made in the trunk of the tree by the old stumps of excised palm leaves he climbed up to the top of a pollarded palm; then he came swiftly down again; showing a golden nudity beneath his floating

(1) Sagar, Keith. The Art of D.H. Lawrence. Cambridge University Press. 1966.

garment."(p.42)

"Ah! how well he looked! That was what I had fallen in love with his health. The health of that little body was a beautiful thing."(p.28)(1).

"I stopped walking and watched. Jinadasa walks ahead of me holding up his sarong so as not to let it get wet from the water. His two naked thighs are like bright lighting. An acute pain spreads all over my body."(Yali Upannemi.p.161)

"After swimming in the stream, he lies on the sand. How beautiful is his nakedness which is washed in the stream and then shines in the sun. I feel like looking at my own body too, removing my sarong to see whether it is also as beautiful as his body."(Yali Upannemi.p.158)

Although there are a lot of reflections of The Immoralist in Yali Upannemi the latter seems to have debased the beauty of some occasions found in the former work by crude allusions to sex. The homosexual tendency in Michel is implied by Gide in subtle situations, mostly speaking about how he appreciated the physical beauty of the boys without any crude allusions, whereas in Yali Upannemi, Ranatunga's preference for boys is shown always with reference to his boiling sexual desires. In The Immoralist Michel's longing for boys is justified as he is physically weak and fails to be happy with his wife though he loved her very much. She too helps him to find handsome boys as she thought their presence, their bodies full of energy and

(1) Gide, Andre. The Immoralist. Penguin.1971

vitality would help him overcome his obsessions. Through subsequent events Gide shows that this psychological trick was really effective. The situation in Yali Upannemi is somewhat different from this. At the time when Ranatunga married he was not suffering from his physical weakness and he believed through his past experiences that he could be happy with a woman if he really loved her. He despises his wife and sneaks out from the bed-room to meet a boy, ruthlessly leaving the newly married wife to suffer. His 'perversion' seems not a natural force but only an imagination of his own confused mind, which is full of ideas gathered from reading various books. For instance, at this particular time, when he was on honeymoon at Polonnaruwa he says that he was reading a novel by Andre Gide. So we can assume that while creating this situation Amarasekara must have definitely been impressed by Gide's *The Immoralist*.(1)

In his third novel, *Depanoladdo* (1961) (*The Disabled*), Amarasekara deals with a less autobiographical but more genuine subject than in his previous novels. The reality about the traditional middle classes in rural Ceylon is symbolised here through the story of Podi Ayya and his family. Despite the constant attempts of the leader of the family, it declines and disintegrates as the children fail to achieve the ideal objects of the parents. Podi Ayya says again and again that

(1) See Amarasekara, Gunadasa. *Yali Upannemi*. 3rd. impression. p.167

the decline of his family has gone on ever since his elder brother married into a lower family despite his parents' strong objections. Then he describes how this incident was regarded as a vital and crucial blow to both the material and spiritual life of the whole family. Then the father dies and Podi Ayya suffers from the burden of responsibilities towards his mother and sisters. The marriage he arranged for one of his sisters creates more troubles for him as his sister begins to complain that he arranged it only to get rid of her. The second sister to whom he had a strong emotional attachment falls in love with a family friend, who is a cripple and a musician by trade. This lame youth comes from a lower class family and his love for Vimala meets with strong objections from Podi Ayya, as he considers Piyasena unworthy of his sister due to his poor social status.

Podi Ayya claims that he is always ready to sacrifice his personal happiness to make the others of his family happy. Vimala's love affair with Piyasena is considered by him as a great disaster. Podi Ayya's sickness, and his land to which he refers quite often, and the lame leg of Piyasena are all used as symbols in this novel. From the very beginning until the end Podi Ayya recites from Buddhist scriptures and thinks of Buddha's teachings, showing how his character is governed by Buddhism. He considers himself as an ideal Buddhist or a 'Bodhisatta' (A future Buddha) and yet he is not free from natural human weaknesses and emotions. Thus his character becomes

hypocritical. Piyasena's letters which Podi Ayya reads after sending Vimala away with the elder sister make him understand his real position and that it was because of his own negligence and selfish behaviour that Vimala had had to stay such a long time unmarried. Piyasena is sensitive but finds no love because of his physical defect until Vimala begins to be kind to him. He too realizes Vimala's loneliness and lack of love and begins to love her. Vimala loves him despite his lameness and he loves her and does not care how much older she was than him. Podi Ayya does not look from a natural and rational point of view like that; he objects, saying that 'Piyasena could not even stand firmly on the ground on both feet.' But Piyasena proves that he was lame only physically; mentally he was strong. It was Podi Ayya and his family who are really lame though not physically; they are lame mentally.

Amarasekara's fourth novel is Gandhabba Apadanaya (1964) (The life of a Gandhabba) which too incorporates the same sort of values and social atmosphere as in his previous novels. As the time and space in this novel are much greater than in any of his previous novels a correspondingly complicated character and social phenomena have been dealt with in Gandhabba Apadanaya. The protagonist in this novel shares most of the characteristics of Ranatunga in Yali Upannemi and Podi Ayya in Depanoladdo. The unrest and emotional confusion in the life of educated youth from middle class families was first incorporated by Martin Wickramasingha in Viragaya. Thereafter

as we have seen before, most other contemporary Sinhalese novelists have made this one of their pet themes.

According to some Buddhist works the Gandhabba is the life departed from one's body after one's death existing in a floating and obscure state before attaining the next life.(1) Though this indefinite state of being is not accepted by all Buddhists alike, Amarasekara employs it as a symbol to illustrate the confused, floating and lost character of Gunaratna. Gunaratna relates his life story, dividing into two distinct phases. The first part is only a report of his youthful experiences. The typical middleclass life portrayed in the contemporary Sinhalese novel; the growth of a sensitive but frustrated young intellectual is presented in the first part.

The second phase is directly concerned with Gunaratna's 'Gandhabba'-like relation with Rita, who is a Tamil girl. At this time Gunaratna has just started to change his views of certain aspects of the society to which he belonged and has taken up a job in the government service which is supposed to be 'respectable'. He finds himself in a great difficulty in choosing between his own free will and his parents' will. If he marries Rita, he will have to give up all relations with his parents. He feared that he would be condemned in conventional Sinhalese society if he marries Rita. The only solution he could think of is to go away from the country leaving his problems behind him to find their own courses. Through one

(1) Papançasudani Majjimanikāyaṭṭhakatha. London. 1928. part. II p. 310. See also Malalasekara, G.P. Dictionary of Pali Proper Names. London. 1937. p. 746.

of his Tamil friends Gunaratna tries to find a suitable husband for Rita and goes to London. When he gets there he begins to repent over his sudden decision to leave Rita without giving any explanation and suffers from severe mental pains and agonies. Meanwhile he realizes that he should have married Rita disregarding all objections from society and goes back to Ceylon to find that Rita was married to a Tamil person and living happily with him.

In this novel Amarasekara's attempt is to raise some questions about the existing social pattern in his country and to indicate that it needs a drastic change and a serious self-examination:

"I can now see the picture of the first half of my life in clearer perspective than before. Although the battle I fought at that early age was daring, I am not sure whether my purpose was definite and solemn. Was it a fight of good will? I kicked off the mean, degraded values that were around me. And I refused them. But can I admit that I had a clear understanding of some greater and better values I wished to achieve by rejecting the previous ones? Is it not the task of a man's culture to display those ideal values with examples?"(Gandhabba Apadanaya.p.484)

After reflecting thus over his mental crisis Gunaratna thinks about a possible solution to the problems of society as follows:

"I know very well, the whole of this society, sooner or later, will have to face these questions raised by my life. They will not be able to run away from these

questions . As this stupid epoch draws to a close, they will have to consider these questions. This stupid, foolish era must expire one day. Society must become intelligent. An intellectually maturing society will find it difficult to avoid facing these questions."

(Gandhabba Apadanaya.p.55)

As we read this novel we may begin to doubt the honesty and reality of the questions that Gunaratna raises through his life. Sometimes he considers society as the chief force controlling his emotional life and complains that as a result of conventions he has to sacrifice his personal happiness. Judging by his behaviour in the first part of his life it is difficult to understand why he could not follow the path preferred by his own mind. Beginning his life as a revolutionary he drifts towards middle class values without any credible reasons. For instance, after graduating from the university he dislikes becoming a civil servant, though his parents insisted, because he despised the idea of becoming a typical petit-bourgeois person. But when he stays at home without any job the neighbours laugh at him. This changes his ideas at once and he finds respectable employment and buys a car as a symbol of his belonging to the bourgeoisie. After that he talks happily about how those same neighbours began to respect him again. Through incidents like these, it is true that a realistic picture of certain aspects of Ceylonese society could be drawn, but these incidents, in fact, prevent the character becoming deep and serious.

The reader may also question whether there were really so

many questions raised by Gunaratna's life? A marriage between the two races, Sinhalese and Tamil, though somewhat rare, cannot be considered a serious problem at the present time. Because such marriages do happen, this character especially, if he really was interested, could have married his Tamil girl friend despite his parents' objections. Some other aspects of Sinhalese society which he criticises are only universal characteristics and not idiosyncratic of this particular society. The recurrent attacks against 'this stupid epoch' seem not to be very appropriate in the Ceylonese social context, they can only be taken as an attempt of the novelist to imitate some novelist-prophets such as Tolstoy or D.H. Lawrence.

The development of an emotional and sensitive language.

By contrast with the language of Wickramasingha, Amarasekara's language is of less importance. In the early works of Amarasekara we can find his great appreciation of Wickramasingha's language. He has gradually developed an individual style with a predominant inspiration from the spoken language of the south of Ceylon. He borrows lavishly from the vocabulary of the classical prose writer and uses a great deal of Sanskrit and Pali words in new contexts. His prose is poetic though he often uses some words which do not convey a clear meaning. Another typical feature in Amarasekara's language is the use of exclamatory sounds and words to emphasise the emotions. These features of his language may be exemplified in the following analysis of excerpts from his novels.

His narrative style is generally simple and pleasant;
he tries to write 'grammatically.'

"ikbitiva api galtalaya pasukoṭa kaṇḍu bāvumakavū kuḍā
kataragama dēvalayaṭa pāminiyemu. ehi āttē ek dēvalayak
novē. devāla gananaki. ek dēvālayak āttē mehā ivurehiya.
mehā ivura sevana karana dāvanta nuga gashi sevanāli
udaya hirurās samaga patitava āta. devālaya idiriyehi
vū demala minisek atin gat gini kabalakin yutuva yādinna
kiyamin siṭiyēya. udaya avva dēvālayehi istoppu källehi
vāṭṭi tibuneya."(1)

(After that, passing the rock, we reached the little temple
of Kataragama that was on the slope of a hill. There is
not only one temple there, but many. One of them is on
the nearer bank. The shadows of the huge Nuga trees
sheltering this bank were disappearing as the morning sun
was rising. A Tamil man, standing in front of the temple
holding a bowl of fire with one hand, was chanting a hymn.
The morning sun was falling over the verandah of the
temple.)

While narrating some incidents Amarasekara describes the
location and surroundings as well. Words such as a 'patita'
(fallen)'davanta'(huge), yadinna (a prayer) etc., and the
rhythm of the sentences have been carefully selected to create
an appropriate feeling about the temple of Kataragama which is
believed to be of miraculous powers.

In the following passage from Depanoladdo we see the style
becoming more flexible and more based on spoken idiom:

(1) Amarasekara, Gunadasa. Karumakkārayo. Colombo.1955. p.41

"maṭa vaḍā avurudu pahakin bāla malayā, bāla naṅgāṭa vaḍā vāḍimālu-vannē ek avuruddakin pamani. Tāttā apa atarin an hāma ekakuṭama vaḍā āḍam-baravūye bāla malayā gānaya. Ayyā igena gattē siniyar pāsvanaturu pamani. mama Kembrij juniyar pantiyaṭa pāsvīmaṭa palamu pāsalen asvi gedara nāvātunemi. apa hāmaṭa vaḍā igena gat malli māṭṭrik vibhāgaya pās kirīmen pasu vaidya vidyālayaṭa bāṇḍi āpotikari vibhāgayenda samat viya.'(1)

(My brother who is five years younger than me is one year older than my sister. Father was more proud of him than any other of us. My elder brother only went to school until he passed Senior Examination. I left school just before passing into the Cambridge Junior class. My younger brother who studied higher than any of us, after passing the matriculation examination joined the medical college and studied to become an apothecary.)

In Depanoladdo the narrative, while representing the actual speech of the narrator, tends to be poetic at times. The tendency towards poetry becomes a dominant aspect in Amarasekara's other novels too. In a lengthy novel like Gandhabba Apadanaya, the simplicity of the narrative deteriorates at times into journalistic reportage:

"ē avurudu kīpaya tula mama potpat visālagananak kiyavīmi. mā kiyavu ingirisi navakatā karuvan atarin magē sita behevin ādagatte Dikans hā Tomas Hāḍi yana navakatā karuvan dedenāya. Hāḍige navakatā valin māvena manas-kānta visituru lōkaya magē samanāl sitaṭama ārunak viya. magē nava yovun hada ē tula sāri sāruyē ē visituru āsurin hadarisi sihinayan mavamini. Tolstoy magē priyatama

(1) Amarasekara, Gunadasa. Depanoladdo. Maharagama. 1961. p.39

lekhakayā vūyē in kalakata pasuvaya. ohugē sāma nava-
 katāvakma pāhē kiyavū mātula ātivūyē bhakti pūrva pra-
 sādāyaki. ohugē navakatā pamanak nova ohu visin liyana-
 lada dārśanika lipida mama mahat āsāven kiyavimi."(1)
 (During those few years I read a large number of books.
 Among the English novelists I read, Thomas Hardy and
 Dickens were my favourites. The wonderful imaginary
 world created by Hardy's novels was very soothing to
 my blooming romantic mind. My adolescent mind dwelt in
 that world dreaming of all sorts of fantasies. It was
 some time later that Tolstoy became my favourite writer.
 A respectful reverence for him arose in me after I had
 read most of his novels. Thereafter I continued to read
 his philosophical writings too.)

This is information tempered with a few emotive words.
 e.g. 'manaskanta visituru lokaya', 'samanal sita' and 'bhakti
 purva prasadaaya'. These words generally fall into the poetic
 category in the Sinhalese language. But according to the con-
 text in which they are used here they fail to give a natural
 and coherent attraction to the language.

The descriptive styles of the contemporary novelists
 show how far they have been impressed by the classical prose
 styles. Amarasekara is quite fond of making new blends of
 styles with classical vocabulary and new words. But the
 general outlook of the descriptions is the same as that of the
 contemporary novel in many other countries. Consider the
 following description from Karumakkarayo:

(1) Amarasekara, Gunadasa. Gandhabba Apadanaya.
 Colombo.1964.p.5

"apa dēvālayaṭa ātulu vatma dekan bihirikaravana ghanṭā nādayen mulu abhyanatarayama ālalī giyeya. mā dēvālayaṭa ātulu vūyē biyak vāni haṅgumakini. ghanṭā nādaya vādivatma magē biya dāḍi viya. visāla bitti valin vaṭavū ehi ātulehi, dās ganān pahan dālve. poltelin nāhavuna bimada, kulunuda, kalu pāhati bittida, naṭana poltel pahanehi dāllē dilise. ēvā biya upadavana suluya. idiripasa āttē durvarna vū tirayaki. tirayehi aṇḍina lada mayura vāhanārūḍha divya rājayānange pratāpavat rūpaya naṭana pahan siluvala eliya nisā, jīvamānava dilisē. siyadaḥas ganān ghanṭāven nāṅguna ruduru haṇḍa yalit mā biya gannana suluviya. ek pāttakin nāṅgena visāla dūmkaṇḍa nisā avaṭa velī āta. anik pāttēn nāṅginne siyalla gila gāṇimaṭa vihiḍuna gini daluvalin yutu dāvena kapurugoḍaya. dohot mudun koṭagat kīpa denek katāven torava biyen ālaluna muhunin divya rājaya desa balā siṭiti." (Karumakkārayo.p.37)

(As we entered, the whole interior of the temple rocked with the deafening roar of the bells. There was a feeling of fear in my mind. That fear in my mind grew with the increasing roar of the bells. Thousands of lamps were alight in this temple of huge, thick walls. The floor smeared with coconut oil, the columns, and black walls were all shining with the reflection of the dancing flickers of the oil lamps. The whole scene was terrifying. There was a discoloured curtain in the front. The majestic figure of the god of Kataragama, seated on his peacock vehicle, was drawn on the curtain and it was also dancing in the lamplight as if it were alive. The loud ringing of thousands of bells made me frightened again. The smoke coming from one side overwhelms the whole atmosphere. In the other corner a heap of camphor was burning with blazing flames as if it was going to devour everything. A few devotees, keeping their hands clasped on their heads, silently and with awe-struck

faces keep vigil round the God-king.)

The tone of the sentences is calm and controlled. They are not used to make a mere description of the famous temple. For thousands of years the god of Kataragama has been considered and revered as the god of war and various miraculous powers have been attributed to him. As he enters the temple the narrator, who is an ordinary countryman, is naturally filled with fear and respect. With all this confusions in his mind he is concerned about the girl who accompanied him there. The various objects and persons described thus become symbols of his mental state and the whole description becomes meaningful in the context. As we mentioned before, classical words and new words are mixed in this style to gain special effects. Consider these phrases: 'ghanta nadayen mulu abhyantrayama alali giyeya.', 'durvarnavu tirayak', 'mayura vahanarudha kataragama divyarajayange pratapavat muhuna', while the phrases 'natana poltel pahane dalle dilise', 'visala dum kanda nisa avata veli ata' etc., which are devoid of Sanskrit words, harmonize the whole description.

The imagery in the above passage is noteworthy. The rattle of the bells is treated as an active force and the flames are seen as trying to devour everything. The sight of the oil lamps is frightening. The faces of the devotees reflect fear.

The following passage is from a description from Yali Upannemi:

"amutu siriyavak mehi bittivala pavā āta. kāma mēsayā

asala siṭina Nandā ehi tibena vānjana valin Ranēgēt
magēt piṅgan piravīmaṭa tātkarayi. tala elalu pāhati
āgē muhunehi āttē puduma āṅgāli kamaki. ē abiyasa tamā
amuttaku bava nositē."(Yali Upannemi.p.8)

(There is a particular charm here, even about the walls.
Waiting at the table Nanada tries to serve more curry
and rice in Rane's and my plates. Fair was her complexion
and an unusual amiability was in her face. One could not
feel a stranger in front of that face.)

Conventional vocabulary and rhetorical descriptions of
women are not found here. Without the help of either old or
new figures of language Amarasekara presents the most important
facts about Nanda, i.e. her friendliness, kindness and hospi-
tality. These qualities are of indispensable value for under-
standing the central character in the novel. Ranatunga achie-
ves resurrection through Nanda's tenderness. First we are
told that there was a particular charm even about the walls of
the house. The Sinhalese phrase 'amutu siriyavak mehi...'
conveys the idea that the life of those who occupy that house
is graceful and pleasant. These feelings are intensified when
we read 'tala elalu paha'(fair in colour) and 'puduma angali
kama'(a strange friendly look) which are taken from the spoken
idiom.

Further aspects of Amarasekara's language can be seen in
the following passage:

"kuḍayak atin gat masin piri sirurakin yutu gāhaniyak
apa pasu kara giyāya. nāvati edesa balā un maṭa āgē
muhunada mānavin penina. duṭumanatin sitehi āsā dalu
liyalavana eya yalit varak dāka ganu vas mama aḍi

kīpayak idiriyata gaman kalemi. tel ihena sulu penumakin
hā vivarava giya denetakin yutu ē muhuna mahat sarāgī
bavak danavannaki. eya mā hada viduliya daharak seyin
duṭuvanama ekavara bāṇdagatte kesēdāyi nodanimi."

(Yali Upannemi.p.235)

(A full-bodied woman passed us with an umbrella in one hand. When I looked at her from where I was standing I could see her face clearly. It was such a face as rekindles the desire in one's mind to see it again and again. She was of energetic appearance, and her eyes were open. Her face stirred desire in one's mind at first sight. I was amazed how her face, like a flash of lightning, captured my mind at the very first glance.)

This is a description of the same woman, Nanda. In the previous passage she was described as full of grace and kindness. But that was not from Ranatunga's point of view. Here we witness how Ranatunga saw her for the first time. Though he was in a very desperate state at the time he was still as passionate as ever. It was during one of his evening strolls with another pickpocket that he saw Nanda like this. She was a prostitute at that time and her make up, gait and appearance attract his experienced eye. But she seemed a strange type of street walker. He knew at once that he would not be unhappy or ashamed in her company. Thus the physical attraction of Nanda is emphasised here to suit Ranatunga's current state of mind.

What captured his eye and mind first were her 'looks'. First he sees her 'masin piri'(full-bodied) figure, then he finds her face, 'dutu manatin sitehi asa dalu liyalavana' (which stirs desire in mind at the first sight.) Again he finds

a phrase from day-to-day speech, 'tel ihena penumakin' (a healthy, energetic appearance) to imply the sexual appeal about her body. The phrase 'viduliya daharak seyin'(like a flash of lightning) is taken from the rhetoric of the classical poet.

Now let us consider this description from Gandhabba Apadanaya which is also about a girl:

"ā kerehi masita prēmāyak pilisiṇḍa gattē ā mulin duṭṭu ē manatehidima yayi maṭa nisāka vaṣāyen kiva hāka. sulu velāvak gasayaṭa rāṇḍi un āgē muhuna desa mā balā unnē maṭa itā supurudu muhunak desa balā siṭinnāk meni. boho-kalak nodāka venva gos tibī hadisiyē yali muna gāsunu muhunak desa balā siṭinnāk meni. vasā un timira paṭalaya palā matuva ā ē artānvita muhuna desa mama vismayen men balā unimi. eya mā siyalaṅga viduliya paṭalayakin velā grahanāyen kāṭikoṭa gattāsē maṭa dānina."

(Gandhabba Apadanaya.p.24.)

(I can say for sure that it was at the first sight of her that I began to love her. When she stopped for a short while under the tree I gazed at her face as if it were a quite familiar one to me. I looked at it as if it were a face which I had suddenly come across after a long interval of oblivion. I looked with amazement, at that meaningful face which appeared at once through the dark curtain,(of oblivion). It captured me like a flash of lightning coiling around my body.)

Although this is from a different novel and about a different girl met in a different situation, the method of description is the same as with Nanda in Yali Upannemi. When describing a woman, Amarasekara is fond of focussing attention on either the erotic, passionate look or the calm,

soothing look in her face. Even his figures of language and vocabulary are almost the same in all these descriptions. He uses the words 'duṭṭu manatehima, 'duṭṭu vanama'(at first sight) quite often, and also the simile 'viduliya daharak seyin'(like a flash of lightning). If he wishes to describe a woman with whom his hero is falling in love she always seems to be familiar and amiable.

His descriptive style is highly organized, following the classical styles. It is rich in expression and suits the sensibility of the narrator. For example:

"niṇḍā gāṇima saṇḍahā vātira gat apa, nonāvatī naṅgana vilāpayak baṇḍu samudura gosa veta kan yomā unne biyakaru bava visin janānaya karanu labana camatkārayen yutuvaya. samudura gosa mattehi ovunovunge kaṭa haṇḍaval pavā apaṭa noāse. sulaṅgehi nonāvatī sālena kūḍārama apa muvākoṭa rākaganuvas karannē maha saṭanaki. samudura gosa eṇṭa eṇṭama vāḍive. lōkāntayehi samudura goḍa vāḍī mihikata gilaganu āttē melesa viyayutuya. apagē kaṭahaṇḍa ē māṇḍa hiravī miyayana prānin dedenekugē keṇḍiriyak vāni noveda? dasatin velā apa gilaganu saṇḍahā nāṅgī ā mē pravāhaya hamuvehi apa mesē mē viṇḍina suvaya mē nirupa-drita bhāvaya hāṇḍinviya yuttē jīvitaya sāksāt karagānī-mak lesin misa an kavara lesakinda."

(Gandhabba Apadanaya.p.342.)

(We heard the perpetual wailing of the sea with a feeling of ecstasy caused by fear when we lay down to sleep. We could not even hear our own voices clearly because of the noise of the sea. The tent fights fiercely against the wind to protect us. The noise of the sea increases continually. At the destruction of the world, it should be thus that the sea will devour the earth. Our voices are just like those of two creatures drowning in that

great flood. As this flood comes from all directions we are still enjoying ourselves, and that pleasure could only be regarded as reaping the best fruits of life. Is there any other explanation for it?)

This is an elevated style. Yet it is simple, as the situation is impressively depicted. The two lovers, Gunaratna and Rita, are spending a night by the sea in Northern Ceylon, trying to forget their problems. The only solace for them is being together like this, hiding from society. The sea, its ferocious noise, etc., are symbols of their troubles. The narrator thinks of 'lokantaya' (The last day of the world) and 'hiravi miyayana pranin dedenaku' (two creatures drowning) indicating how his mind was confused with the possible unhappy ending of his affair with Rita. They are sleeping so close together, but they are unable even to hear each other's voices. Just like the powerful, mighty sea, society and its conventions will object to their relationship. The last sentence implies another aspect of Gunaratna's character, i.e. his tendency to enjoy the existing moment.

Now let us consider a few examples of the conversational style in Amaresekara's novels:

"piyuntat unge mula mataka nāativelā. ugē appa metana bāla mehe karapu hāṭi ūṭa mataka nāativelā. ugē dūṭat dān ingirisi. ēkaṭa lāsti vecca pādaḍayo innakoṭa mokada?..... uṃbaṭa puluvannam udagedi dīla ūva arakige gubbāyamaṭa piṭatkarala ārapan....ara vēsi māyan mukulu karala ōṇāma ilandāriyek ravatṭaganna puluvan rāhi. ē vēsi tamayi issellama ūva otenṭa gāl karaganna māyan dāna ātte."

(Depanoladdo. p.15)

(The peon has also forgotten his beginning. He has forgotten how his old man did manual labour here. Now even his daughter wants to learn English. Why not, when there are such cads here to help them.....Yes, if you can, help him to get inot the clutches of that hussy.... She is such a tart she could deceive any youth with her conqueetry. I expect it is that tart who first started to drag him to her place.)

Here the author has tried to imitate the natural speech of an irritated person. The father is burning with anger about his son who has started to visit a girl from a family which they regarded as unworthy of their status. But he puts all the blame on the girl and her family. Her father is a 'peon' whose father was a servant at the speaker's house. Along with all this she is an ill-mannered girl. He uses words such as 'ūva, 'Pādaḍayo', 'vēsi', 'rāhi' etc., which are inevitably heard in quarrels.

Now let us consider a different type of dialogue:

"monava monavada tamuse karē? apiṭat kiyanava'.

'api kohomada oya komasāris mahatvaru vagē loku vāda karanne?'

'apiṭa mokō kār tiyenavāyi. apiṭa pulavan oya gāhi gāhī kis ekak ganna eka vitarayi.'

'kis ekak gattā.' kohedida oyi?'

'kohedida itin kāmare ātuledi misak'

'tamuse hari āreṣṭayekne...kohomada itin tamuse oya ikman-aṭa oya tatvayaṭa āve?'"(Gandhabba Apadānaya.p.131)

('Tell me what else, what else did you do?'

'How can we do 'big things' like you commisioners, because we don't have cars. The only thing we can do is steal a kiss hurriedly.'')

'What! you had a kiss? Where was that, man?'

'Where do you think, in the room of course.'

'You are a great man.. How did you manage to go so far in such a short time?')

Here we see Gunaratna who is a commissioner asking a boy anxiously about how he kissed Rita, the girl with whom he had just started to go out. Without telling the boy of his own relationship with Rita he tries to find out about her behaviour from the boy. Gunaratna's anxiety, suspicion and admiration of the boy's courage are all reflected in this short dialogue. In the words, 'monava monavada' (what and what), 'kohedida oyi' (where was that, man), Gunaratna's boiling curiosity is well presented. His excitement, and attempt to flatter the boy are seen in the phrases 'tamuse hari sresthayekne' and 'kohomada oya tatvayata ave?' (you are a great man, how did you manage to go that far?)

To sum up the discussion on Amarasekara's language we can observe some idiosyncratic characteristics such as suggestivity and frequent use of emotional words:

"apa maradānaṭa pāmīni bava oralōsu kanuvenda, avāṭa vū hōṭal vala eliyenda maṭa yantam vaṭaha gata hākiviya. ehet dārānīpātayen vasina vāssa elesama nonāvati vasiyi. mage āṇḍum siyalla tetabariva āṅgaṭa ālī āta. ēvā hiri-kita bava pavā maṭa dān noānge. ehet mā abhyantaraya ekama prīti promodayakin āvissī āta. viduli eliyak apa idiriyehi vihidiyatma Nandā māvetāṭa turuluveyi. surata yavā tada-koṭa vālaṇḍagat ā sirurehi unusuma mā gatāṭa mehmasitāṭa-da dāneyi. ā visin hisehi galvana lada kisiyam ālepayaka sugandaya varinvara matuvī eyi. vāssa mulumahat avāṭa

lōkaya vaṭā baṇḍina lada maha pavuraki. ē māda jīvatvana
ekama pana ātiyavun dedena apa pamani. viduliya avasanva
āsenā senahaṇḍa goravā nimavetma mā vetāṭa turuluvū
Nandā sihin haṇḍin sināveyi. āgē ē sināva satuṭin matvū-
vaki."(Yali Upannemi.p.

(From the clock tower and the nearby hotels I could just
see that we had come to Maradana. The torrent was still
falling heavily. My clothes were all wet and stuck to
to my body. But I did not feel how cold they were, for
all of my interior was filled with a great joy. Whenever
lightning flashes in front of us Nanda embraces me. When
I embrace her with my right hand, the warmth of her body
is transferred into my body and mind as well. From time
to time I felt a certain scent coming from her hair.
The rain is like a wall built around us separating us
from the whole world. We two are the only living beings
in it. After a flash of lightning as the thunder dies
away Nanda, who was embracing me laughs softly. That
laughter of Nanda was charged with joy.)

The imagery of rain, storm, etc., are used as symbols in
this passage. Ranatunga has just found Nanda after she had
run away from the brothel. Now she is his only concern. The
heavy rain is a great wall protecting his love. Carefully
selected lively words express the throbbing pleasurable emo-
tions in Ranatunga's mind. Words such as 'tetabariva' and 'hi-
rikita' are taken from colloquial speech and phrases such as
'daranipatayen', 'abhyantaraya ekama pritipramodayakin', and
'alepayaka sugandaya' are from the classical prose, which
keep the balance of the style while adding to its poetry.
Neither Ranatunga nor Nanda is scared of the rain and the storm.
When she clings to him and laughs softly it is as if to

proclaim that she has found her protector at last. Poetic and creative instances like these can be taken as examples of the development of the language of Sinhalese fiction in the work of contemporary novelists.

Following are a few examples of Amarasekara's sentimental use of language:

"ahō mā jīvana mūr̥tiya! sadākal oba mā hada mādura āloka^{ma}t karamin in naṅgina bāti suvaṇḍa viṇḍimin vājaṁbenna."
(Yali Upannemi. p.74)

"mē pivituru sundara udāsana mā sita ē atītaya veta tava tavat ādage^{na} yayi"(Yali Upannemi. p.204)

"oba vinīta sundara ruva mavāgānīmaṭa' yi mā daṅgalannē, ahō! suranganā lokayak māvū ē pōdina rātriyehi oba nosālī balā un ākāraya. niścala dāsehi vū prēmārdra bālma. ahō! mahada sadākal eliya kala mini pahana, obē ē vinīta ruva hamuvehi mē siyalla kotaram pahatda?"(Yali Upannemi.p.85)

"mā ē avalan jīvitaya veta ādunē etanin hō sānasīmak, asvāsīmak lābiya hākiyayi yana adahasin yutuvaya"

"avalan aśobhanatvayak dāk^{vu} āgē mulu āṅga pata hā muhuna mātula ekavarama āsāv^{ak} jananaya kalēya."

"pasugiya kāl^{aya} nāmati pāpi aṇḍuru sevanāli pahava gos ē pivituru sundara bhūmiya mā idiripiṭa daknaṭa ātivāsē maṭa hāṅgina. pāpī kalu aṇḍura mama ekala nodattemi."
(Yali Upannemi. pp. 200,201,204.)

("Oh! idol of my life, May you dwell eternally in my heart, illuminating it and enjoying the scent of respect emanating from it."

"My mind is being carried back towards that past on this sublime and fascinating morning."

"I am trying to recall your modest, charming figure in my mind. Oh! how quietly you were waiting on that heavenly 'Poyaday' night! And the lovely glance in your eyes. Oh!

My crystal lamp which illuminates my heart eternally!
How mean are the rest (of the world) in front of your
modest, fascinating beauty."

"I allowed myself to fall into that dirty, low life because
I fancied that I would at least find happiness there."

"A desire was begotten suddenly in my mind when I saw her
mean, dirty face, body and appearance."

"I felt as if that pure, fine land had appeared in front
of me after the disappearance of the dark shadows of the
past. In those days I did not know about the sinful
black darkness.")

Amarasekara employed this emotive style mostly in Yali Upannemi and in his short stories. This style which is full of meaningless exclamatory words and phrases which are often repeated has not become popular in the language of Sinhalese fiction. The vocabulary Amarasekara uses in his emotional style was once the repertoire of the school of popular Sinhalese poets generally known as the 'poets of the Colombo period', the poets such as Alwis Perera, Mimana Prematilaka, Kudaligama etc. Such words as 'ramanīya, sundara, pivituru', 'nokiliṭi, 'bolañda' etc., were quite often used by these poets and they were later called 'susum pada' (empty words or sigh-words) by some critics.(1) In order to present the emotional excitements of his characters Amarasekara in his early works employed these words to the extent of harming the artistic balance and harmony in the style in a work like Yali Upannemi.

(1) See Wickramasingha, Martin. Navapadya Simhalaya. .
Maharagama. 1959.

Another kind of favourite of Amarasekara is such words as 'avalan', 'aśōbhana', 'jaḍa', 'seluva', 'pāpi aṇḍura' etc. These words are perhaps used in such abundance for the first time in Sinhalese fiction by Amarasekara. All these words existed in the language before him. But he uses them in new contexts and new combinations. This is an example of the novelist trying to express new ideas and experiences in new language. The creative writer creates new language not only with entirely new words but often with common or old words by using them in new contexts. For instance 'domnas saḥagata' is a very old phrase in Sinhalese which was never before used in combination with a word like 'pāluva'. Amarasekara uses this new phrase 'domnas saḥagata paluva' to indicate the indefinite, obscure, sad moods of his characters. Referring to nakedness he always writes 'jaḍa' or 'avalam seluva' and about erotic feelings as 'pāpi aṇḍuru situvili'. These are new phrases but they are used so often that they become a nuisance to the reader. The invention of such new terms can be considered as a result of Amarasekara's attempt to follow the style of an English novelist like D.H. Lawrence.

K.Jayatilaka (b.1926), back to social and cultural themes.

Jayatilaka is the most copious contemporary novelist who genuinely tries to depict the conflict between the established values of society and those of the contemporary individual which are new and contingent. As Saratchandra says 'the characters of Jayatilaka, being unable to rely on any kind of values

in life and failing to find happiness in any of their actions, live in perpetual disappointment. Their apathy is quite different from that of Aravinda in Viragaya. Jayatilaka's characters do not know what they should do or for what purpose they should live, they repent and regret and float here and there like dead leaves in the air. They have not even one foot planted in the traditional culture or its values. And in consequence they do not know where to stand. As they are not very religious they try to seek pleasure through pseudo-philosophical investigations.!(1)

In a critical analysis of Jayatilaka's work we will be able to find that most of these ideas of Saratchandra are true and acceptable. But we must not forget the fact that Saratchandra has made his criticism only on the early work of Jayatilaka. In the later works, Jayatilaka's characters are not as lost as those in his early novels. In these later novels there are some characters who have firm attachments with the traditional culture, though they are not so original.

Parajitayo (1960)(The defeated) is Jayatilaka's maiden work which is remarkable for its interesting portrayal of character. The author's main concern in this novel is the psychological behaviour of his characters. Udeni, the hero, while attending classes at the Law College in Colombo gets involved with leftist political activities. At the same time

(1) Saratchandra. 'Sinhala Navakata Itihasaya ha Vicaraya.

attention is drawn towards Udeni's obsession of sexual weakness. Because of this complex he decides to marry from a poor family. Thus he marries Chalani hoping that she would be happy as his wife despite his inability to satisfy her sexually.

The portrayal of character in this novel can be examined from three dimensions: i. Udeni's family background and his political activities. ii. the deteriorating conjugal relationship based on an illusion. iii. Chalani's family background and Udeni's economic situation. These three dimensions construct the motif of the novel through which the theme of cultural conflict springs. Udeni becomes hopeless as regards most concerns in his life, such as his profession, politics, marriage and his relationship with his parents. Other significant characters such as Chalani, her father and Asoka also are defeated in the end. To marry a wealthy respectable person and to live a luxurious life had been the childhood dream of Chalani. So at the beginning Udeni seemed to her as a gift from the gods with magic powers to raise her from the slum to the luxuries of a middleclass house. After the marriage she finds that the wonderland she entered with so much hope was only a dream. Her father too becomes disappointed in the same way when he finds that Udeni was not as rich as he expected and also is not friendly with him. The ardent socialist politician, Asoka, is frustrated in the end as his honesty is challenged by his colleagues and he is eventually abandoned by them.

Aprasanna Katavak(1963) (An unpleasant story), Jayatila-ka's second novel, is centred upon the theme of complicated human relations and the perpetual dissatisfaction of man. The unsatisfied sexual life plays a major role in this novel too. Pala, the protagonist, is not obsessed with sex in the same way as Udeni but in a different way. He loves his wife at the beginning of their married life until she could not stand his perverted behaviour any longer. Quite ironically, in his youth Pala had been interested in various doctrines and mystic teachings and tried to control his sexual feelings through them. When he was learning English in Colombo he came to experience the new morality in the city and began to criticise conventional ideas.

When Pala comes back to the village from Colombo, it was not only his life, but the village too which had been invaded by commercialism. He tries in vain not to allow himself to be tempted by the new values. Pala's building a new house and buying a car are symbolic incidents of his acceptance of the values of the new middle class. He succeeds in securing a place in the middle class but his personal life with Nirupa is sorrowfully unhappy. Nirupa is equally unhappy and takes up teaching as a change from monotonous family life. After a while she takes part in a school play which leads to an affair with Jayasingha, the producer of the play. Meanwhile Pala cultivates a fancy towards an attractive dance teacher, Premalata. Thus the plot consists of a triple love affair:

Pala-Nirupa,
Nirupa-Jayasingha and
Pala-Premalata.

These persons do not seem to be concerned about morals or traditions. Nor do they care about society. When Pala contemplates flirting with Premalata he is only concerned with self-justification. When considering Nirupa's affair with Jayasingha the reader would wonder if this promiscuity is not too bold for a girl like Nirupa. Being a girl brought up only in traditional society would she become so promiscuous? We will not be able to understand these characters unless we consider them as universal human beings and not as typical of modern Ceylon.

Charita Tunak (1963) (Three Characters) is the most discussed and most praised novel by Jayatilaka. As the title indicates this short novel presents three characters from rural Ceylon. Isa, Sana and Ranjit, the three brothers, are typical of the Sinhalese village. Deep understanding of these characters and objective presentation of them is the most important aspect of Charita Tunak. Isa, the oldest brother, is the narrator. After the death of the father Isa assumes the position of the leader of the family and thinks of his responsibilities seriously. Sana, the second brother, is disobedient and turns out to be a typical village 'thug' and the youngest brother, Ranjit studies to become a school master.

Isa is a 'Bodhisatva' type of character like Podi Ayya

in Amarasekara's Depanoladdo. They sometimes think of their self-sacrificial acts as being like those of the Bodhisatvas in Buddhist literature, though they occasionally complain for not receiving gratitude. The occasional hesitations and grumblings of Isa seem to be natural as he is a human being. But Saratchandra regards this as an obstruction to the full enjoyment of this novel. Further he comments: 'The doubts of the reader may arise from the fact that the narrator's and the author's views are mixed up in the story. As the narrator is an ordinary villager and the novelist is a sophisticated city-type, the reader is aware that their views could not be similar. Although the only means for the author to express his views is to do it through the narrator, it is sometimes inappropriate.'(1)

We can agree with Saratchandra on this point since this defect is also seen in some other novels of Jayatilaka. The most important feature in Charita Tunak, perhaps, is the well depicted characters. Each character stands out distinctly and in its own personality and yet belongs to the same root. The economic use of language is another interesting feature in Charita Tunak. Within its simple form the story absorbs functional significance from a few minor characters such as the mother and Sana's wife.

Delovata Nati Aya (1964) (Between Two Worlds), Adhithana (1967) (The foundation/Determination), Kalo Ayan Te (1965) (It's Time for you) and Pita Maha (1966)(The Grand Father)
(1)Saratchandra, 'Sinhala Navakata Itihasaya ha Vicaraya.p.138

are later novels by Jayatilaka. I propose to consider the themes and plots of some of these novels, as it will help us to understand how some of the contemporary novelists tend to stick to the same sort of themes and experiences.

Delovata Nati Aya, fortunately, does not fall into the common category. It is the first novel written in Sinhalese involving true political history of the recent past. We may assume the victory of the leftist parties in 1956 as the central theme in this novel. We cannot resist from identifying some of the major characters with some historical persons who became famous after the 1956 elections in Ceylon. The fictitious characters of three youths from the village are given on a parallel with those of the political leaders. After emigrating to the city these three youths take three different paths in life like the three brothers in *Charita Tunak*.

The novelist seems to be deeply moved by the political situation in his society and tries to criticise and expose such features as corruption, nepotism and discrimination against caste etc., in this novel. Although the story in general is insipid and most characters tediously uninteresting this novel is not completely devoid of merits. Two of the three youths are strikingly portrayed. The style shows Jayatilaka's growing concern with developing the language.

'*Adhithana*' is another short, poetical novel. The number of characters is limited to two. Both the hero and

heroine are artists. While dealing with the love story of Gitananda and Miulasi, the novelist tries to criticise the malicious competition, corruption and hatred in artistic circles in contemporary Ceylonese society. Gitananda and Miulasi are being harassed by the malice and vicious deeds of their colleagues. The more cruel society was, the more firm they become. For a long time Miulasi controls her feelings and does not allow herself to be overcome by emotions, as she has, on the ruins of her past experiences, laid a new foundation for the future.

There are some unusual aspects in these two characters. Gitananda started his career as a musician but later has been forced by circumstances to go into journalism. His disappointment leads to a frustrated loneliness. His behaviour seems unrealistic as his long bachelor life has not been adequately portrayed. We cannot refrain from laughing when Gitananda later speaks of his attempts at protecting his virginity. Miulasi is not much concerned about sex as her early experiences have taught her not to be carried away by love. The metamorphosis that occurred in Miulasi's life while she was in India has not been described with sufficient care and detail.

In Pita Maha, which is considered by some critics as one of the best novels by Jayatilaka, the hackneyed theme of the change of life and values in rural society is the dominating theme. Jayatilaka is not fond of writing lengthy novels

and this is also like most of his other novels, very short. It is set in a small village but there are a number of characters, unlike in other short novels by him. The people, customs, atmosphere are the same as we meet in Charita Tunak. According to the author's note to the novel, his attempt is to present the change that took place in the life of the people in a village in western Ceylon about fifty years ago. This is the same theme used by Jayatilaka himself in Charita Tunak and some other novelists like Wickramasingha and Madavala Ratnayaka. The narrator, Podi Dombe, is similar to Isa in Charita Tunak and Podi Ayya in Amarasekara's Depanoladdo. The author's claim is to have created a different character from Isa. The most distinct difference between these two characters is that Isa remains a bachelor until the end of his life while Podi Dombe marries and lives an ordinary family life.

From the beginning of the story the way Podi Dombe grows up and his attitude towards family affairs, the father's death, and performing his duty towards the family are all reminiscent of Charita Tunak. Both Isa and Podi Dombe are prepared to sacrifice personal benefit for the sake of the welfare of others. The brothers and sisters in both the works are similar in character as regards their lack of respect and ingratitude towards these 'good samaritans'. There is nothing newly explored about the behaviour or the way of life of these villagers and no new approach is made to show how commercialism has invaded

the static village society. Some of the symbols such as the 'family house' and its role in the story remind us of the 'mahagedara' in Wickramasingha's Gamperaliya. The symbolic incident of giving the strip of land with the father's grave for the new road and walking over it with the family cannot be taken as natural or spontaneous. The Pali word 'pitamaha' means the father's father. In the first half of the novel mostly the character of the narrator's father is depicted, and thereafter the attention is mostly drawn towards the narrator's own life. Thereafter, when his son is born, a small part is devoted to relating this son's peculiar characteristics and the village priest's prediction that he might become a 'great person' like his father's father (Pitamaha). Perhaps the author intends to predict that the values of the older generation have not died with the death of the people like Maha Dombe, but will gain resurrection with the growth of a new generation. But he does not say whether those values of his father and his way of life can be universally accepted now or even whether they were really appreciated in his own time. While the newly prosperous people like his own elder brother are thriving and respected by everybody, 'Maha Dombe' is forgotten and criticised by some and Podi Dombe is neglected and laughed at.

Jayatilaka's style is characterised by the inspiration of such leading contemporaries as Wickramasingha as well as of the classical prose styles. As we have seen in the earlier chapters of this study some writers of the late 19th and

early 20th centuries had also sought inspiration from classical styles. They were urged by devotional and puritanical motives and therefore they failed to develop the language for the requirements of the modern novelist. The contemporaries consider classical styles from a different angle since their aim is neither to heighten the style as a superficial decoration nor to purify the language. They borrow from classical vocabulary to improve the aesthetic quality in their styles as well as to express some ideas more impressively. The style in Charita Tunak and Pitamaha of Jayatilaka is especially marked by this characteristic.

The general narrative style of Jayatilaka seems to be at times like a combination of those Wickramasingha and Amarasekara. His method of description too shows his great admiration of Wickramasingha's style. For example:

"Pāsal noyana Sanā vāḍima kālaya gatakarannē gedarin piṭa-taya. ohu udē varuve Batalavattata gos bōla gasayi. savasa Kuruṇḍu vattata gos kāḍ gasayi. nātahot Pinvatte kaḍayak gānē rastiyādu veyi. ohu gedara ennē rā bōvu-vāṭa pasuvaya. gedara pāmīni pasuva hāma denāma ohuṭa bāna vaditi. avavāda karati. goluvaku men siyalu bānum ivasana ohu ē gāna kisi tākīmak nātiva pasuvadāda ema pilivetama anugamanaya karayi. mama ohuṭa āḍāpali kīma siritak vasayen dinapatāma karami. Sanā hoṇḍa miniseku vēya yana balāporottuvak taḍin nātāt Ranjitvat narak noviyadī bēragānīmata nam esē kalayutuyayi site."(1)

(1) Jayatilaka, K. Charita Tunak. Gampaha. 1963. p. 51

(Sana, as he does not go to school now, spends most of his time out of doors. In the morning he goes to Batalawatta to play ball games. He goes, in the afternoon, to Kurunduwatta to play cards or hangs around the 'boutiques' in Pinwatta; comes home only after night fall. The others start to reproach and lecture him. Like a dumb person he listens to all that, and repeats the same routine the next day as well. As a habit I keep on blaming him everyday. Although I did not expect Sana to be reformed, it seemed to me that my reproaches were necessary for Ranjit's sake.)

This kind of dull and insipid style is seen occasionally in some of the works of Wickramasingha and Amarasekara. This is the simple style of the journalist, which does not require much concentration or experience. Jayatilaka has afterwards begun to be independent. While Wickramasingha and Amarasekara learn from the idiom of the southern region Jayatilaka concentrates on the colloquial idiom of the western villages near Colombo. These developed aspects in Jayatilaka's style will be exemplified in several following examples:

"kussiyē bitti siyallama dumvādī kapuṭu kalu pāhagena tibū namut istōppuve bitti monapāṭa dāyi balāgānimāṭa nohāki taramāṭa ehi pintūra ellā tibini. pintūrayen novāsi kalā-turakin hō itirivū tānak tibini nam eya dina darsānāyēn vāsītibini."(1)

(The walls in the kitchen had turned 'crow-black' with soot, but one could not see the colour of the walls in the verandah as they had been covered with pictures.

(1) Jayatilaka, K. Parajitayo. Colombo. 1960. p.16

The few spots where there were no pictures had been covered with calendars.)

This description gives a clear picture of the small house of Chalani in Parajitayo. 'kaputu kalu paha' (crow-black) is the kind of phrase typical of Jayatilaka. At the same time he tries to achieve a measure of discipline to his style by following the classical structures. Phrases such as 'tibu namut', 'nohaki taramata', 'tibini nam' etc., are examples of 'elevating' the style. Consider this example from Parajitayo:

"nāṭuma balāgena siṭṭima Udēniṭa mahat sitvēdanāvak viya. ohu puṭu āndaṭa hettuvī uḍa bālīya. pankāvangen vadina sulaṅgin leladena vividha varna bālun ohuṭa penina. piṭṭin lassana vuvat mē gāhanu hāma denāma bālun bōla men hisyayi sitannaṭa ohu utsāha kalēya. ehet ē bālun bōla gāhanunṭa vaḍā tama sitaṭa samavēyayi ohuṭa sitina. ēvāda tama sita menma ekama tānakaṭa bāṇḍī siṭṭina namut stira-tvayak nāṭiva nitara cancala veyi." (Parajitayo.p.16.)

(Udeni found it very painful to watch the dance. He looked up, leaning against the back of the chair, and saw some balloons of various colours shaken by the wind from the fans. Then he wondered if those balloons were not like the women at that dance. No, they were more similar to his mind. The balloons too, though they were bound to one place just like his own mind, were shaking all the time and had no stability.)

At this time Udeni, the hero in Parajitayo, was confused and disappointed with himself as well as with society. He wished to criticise both. The image of the balloons, void, bright in colour, transient, produces a double effect. Udeni disliked the snobbish westernized society, and the ladies at

the dance were like those balloons. At the same time he perceives his own condition, the instability, confusion, feeling of loss, and compares himself with the balloons. Though he went to the dance he did not have the slightest intention of joining the dance. But the circumstances forced him to dance, or rather he longed for it. This was a new experience to him, as he never knew that his mind was so uncontrollable. He wished some one would drag him to the dance as he did not have courage to invite a lady to dance with him. Inexperienced and naive as he was, he imagined that a girl would come up to him and invite him to dance with her. When he saw that nobody cared for him and no girl was coming to invite him he got into the confusion seen in the above passage. Through such descriptions the portrayal of character in a novel becomes really interesting and subtle.

In the following extracts we can see Jayatilaka attempting to colour his style with poetry:

- i. "kalin hāma geyak avatāma pāhē tibunu kālāroda elivī āta. dūmburu pāṭa bittara biṇḍagena ena sudu hā kaha kurulu pāṭavun men māṭi geval tubū tānvala sudu hunu hā samara geval matuveyi. mā sitā siṭiye mā gama pasukara bohō dura gos āta yanuya. namut venat atakin gama taraṅgayakaṭa. men mā pasukara damā diveyi."(1)

(The woods surrounding every house had been cut down. New white and yellow houses were coming up in the places where there had been brown clay houses, like

(1) Jayatilaka, K. Apprasanna Katavak. Colombo. 1963. p.67.

white and yellow birds emerging from brown eggs. I was thinking that I had gone a long way and left the village far behind. Yet the village runs before me in another direction.)

"kalin pirisiduva pāvati namut kramayen kiliṭivemin pāvati kihipa palakda tibina. in ekak handiyē pihiti ambalamaya. ē asalama vū pāsarat āta kelavaraka pihiti pansalat tavat depalaki. ambalame visuvan tula pirisidu kamak notibunu namut kavuru visin hō ekala eyaṭa pirisidu penumak lābuna sāṭi pudumaya. mesē novūpāsala hā pansala gamadekalavara naṅganalada pahan dekak men bābalina."
(Aprasanna Katāvak.p.67)

(There were a few places gradually becoming dirty though they had been clean before. One of them was the 'ambalama' (the roadside free rest house) which was situated at the crossroads. Two other such places were the village school and temple situated at the far end of the village. Although the people who rested in the 'ambalama' were not quite clean themselves I was surprised to see that the place was kept clean by someone. The school and the temple were different, they were shining like two lamps set up at the two ends of the village.)

ii. "api bohō velāvak senaṅgaṭa muvāvi ē desa balā siṭiyemu. ā sudu lamā sārīyak ānda sudu malvaṭṭiyak gena, sudu saṅda rās pīramin oba moba pāvena viṭa perāṭa vaḍā priyankarayayi maṭa sitē. gavumaṭa vaḍā dāmuna penumak lamā sārīya āndiviṭa ā tula āta." (Aprasanna Katavak.p.78)

(We were watching her for a long time hiding among the crowds. As she floated gracefully in the white moonlight, carrying a tray of white flowers and wearing a white girl's sari she looked much prettier than before. The girl's sari gave her a more disciplined look than the skirt.)

The first example is significant due to the clarity of expression through impressive figures of language. As mentioned above, like many other contemporary Sinhalese novelists Jayatilaka also deals with changing aspects of the village. Some of the early novelists like Piyadasa Sirisena have also written about the same subject. The difference is that they did not understand the inevitability of the change and did not analyse it objectively. They reported the change in rural society in a style showing their strong disapproval of what was happening. The contemporary novelist writes about it to achieve some literary aims.

In the first of the above passages despite its extraneous outlook, the arrival of commercialism and its effects on both external and internal life in the village are reflected. The style is rich with imagery. The likening of newly emerging houses to birds coming out of eggs has its full effect here as an original image. The old houses were brown, just like the egg shells, while the new houses are white and yellow like the small birds emerging through brown egg shells. In the past, the village temple and school were considered the most important places, the centres of education, moral guidance, keeping peace etc., and therefore they were like two great lamps set up at the two ends of the village. Consider the power and clarity in the expressions 'ma sita sitiye ma..... ma pasukara diveyi.', which show the development of the language in expressive power and as a perfect medium for the novel.

The extract no.ii delights us with its poetry. The careful selection of words is noteworthy. The young narrator is secretly watching his future wife. The repetitive use of the word 'sudu'(white) is the most important feature here. The atmosphere at the temple on this 'poya' day is calm and pleasant. The moonlit night was adding to this romantic atmosphere. After creating this suitable background for his stealthy admiration of the girl he allows us to know some of his feelings too. In her white 'lama sari' she seemed to him more attractive than usual.

In descriptions of personal relationships or sexual scenes Jayatilaka's language is full of suggestion. Unlike Amarasekara he hesitates to speak openly about sex. In fact, all the contemporary novelists when they had to write about sex have been inhibited and reserved. The reason for this, perhaps, is the problem of language, as the classical vocabulary is too closed and elevated and the colloquial vocabulary too open and usually considered obscene. Some contemporary novelists like Amarasekara and Jayatilaka have therefore tried to invent a new vocabulary, mostly by moulding old words:

"Nirūpāge śarīrayē punarutpattiya labātibū ākramanaśīlī svarupayat, unusumat kramayen kṣayavī yayi. api yalit yāntrika rūpamen jīvat venṭa puruḍuvemu. edinedā kaṭayutu eyin ituvena bava sābavaki. ehet manuṣya jīvitaya jivitayak bavāṭa patkarana āsvādaya eyin nolābeyi. manuṣyayā yantra sūtravalin venkoṭaliya hākke jivita-yaṭaṭ vaḍā ohu saṭuva pavatnā āsvādana śaktiya nisā novēda?"

(The re-kindled aggressive vitality and the warmth in Nirupa's body is dying again. We are again getting back to our routine. It was sufficient just for our daily needs. Yet it does not give the satisfaction which makes human life a real life. Is it not one's sensitivity and not just life itself that makes man different from machines?)

Apparently the subject is sex. But it is not directly referred to. The reader knows that 'rekindled aggressive nature' (akramanasili avarupaya) is Nirupa's renewed interest in sex after the time during which she was flirting with Jayasingha. Pala who was desperate in his sexual desire, as Nirupa was not responsive to him, found that he could excite her by talking about Jayasingha in bed. This trick worked for some time but after a while he was in trouble again as she could not be made interested in any way. This sexual conflict between the husband and wife is presented in the above passage with the help of such words as 'akramana sili' (aggressive), 'kramayen ksayaveyi' (diminishes), 'asvadaya' (pleasure) etc.

The language in Adhithana is remarkable for its poetic and lyrical quality:

"malaka peti ekinēka paravi gilihī vāṭennākmen tārūn-
yaya avurudden avuruddaṭa igilī vāṭenu dakina viṭa āti-
vennē balavat sanvēgayaki. yovun viya pipunu malak men
priyankaratvaya, prabodhaya hā sugandhaya yana mevāyin
pirītirī pāvātina."

'bamarun visin vaṭakaragat mal pokurumen, apa ekala
yahaluvaṇ visin vaṭakaraganu lāba kā bī prīti vīmu.

yavvanatvayen pirī bābalunu muhunu vayasē hiru rāsin
dāvī kālavarṇa vīgena yayi."(1)

('One feels very sad when one witnesses how one's youth wears out year by year like the petals of a flower falling one by one. Youth was full of attraction, life and fragrance.'

'In those days, just like flowers surrounded by bees, we enjoyed ourselves in the company of our friends. But now those faces which had been full of youth were turning dark, burnt with the blazing sun of time.)

ii."eya atīśayinma manaskānta vaktrayaki. ē muhuna vaḍāt
alankāra karana madahasak ehi āta. kisiyam kitikāvīmakin
magē sakala śarīrayama hirivāṭī giyeya."(Adhistana.p.18)

(There was a fascinating smile on that face which was extremely pleasant. The whole of my body was thrilled at once with a certain tickling.)

In our discussion on the novels of Saratchandra we will see that his style is quite similar to this style of Jayatilaka, as seen in these passages. This lyrical style has been selected by Jayatilaka for this particular novel as it suits the lyrical, romantic elements in the plot. Consider the image of falling petals of a flower. It is likened to the years dropping from one's life. The whole of life is thus compared to a flower; when it is in full bloom, it is young, the friends are the bees, time (old age) is the sun that burns the petals of the flower of life. In the second example we see short simple sentences mixed with poetic idiom ('alankāra

(1) Jayatilaka, K. Adhistana. Colombo.1967. p.11.

karana madahasak') and colloquial words ('kiti' 'hirivāṭi giyeya).

The conversational style in Jayatilaka's works reminds us of Amarasekara's style regarding the care and ease with which it is handled. It is interesting to watch the drama in the conversations as follows:

"'Piyadāsa'

'enava nōna' Piyadāsa pāminiyēya.

'uṃbaṭa koyinda bālun?'

'kaḍen gattā 'yi Piyadāsa āṃbaremin utara dunneya.

'kaḍen gattā? kavuda uṃbaṭa kaḍen bālun ganna salli dunne?'

'ammā'

'ammā? kīyak dunnada?'

'rupiyalayi'

'bālun valaṭa kīyak giyāda?'

'sata pahayi'

'kō balanna itiri salli'

'Piyadāsa sata anūpahak genavut pennuveya. (Parājitayo. p.153.)

('Piyadasa'

'Here I am, madam', said Piyadasa coming forward.

'How did you get balloons?'

'I bought them from the shop' Piyadasa answered fidgeting.

'You bought them from the shop? Who gave you money to buy balloons?'

'My mother'

'Your mother? how much did she give you?'

'One rupee'

'How much did you spend on the balloons?'

'Only five cents'

'Let me see the balance'

Piyadasa showed her ninety-five cents.)

This is given in the novel as an example of the antagonistic attitude of Chalani towards the servant boy. She made him her scape goat as she was unable to clash directly with her husband. Chalani suspects the boy and tries to find whether he has stolen money from her. Her tone is rude. The boy's is timid and innocent. In contrast with this we can find how the tone of the speech changes in a different situation:

"lajja nādda malli? malli monavaḍa mē karana ēva? tavama mēgana kisit Udeni danne nāhā. namut dānagattot?'
 'itinēka eyat karapu dēma novā? Vasanta sināsemin kīya.
 Vasantagē mē vacanayen Chalanīge sita kīri gāsina.
 'ēka venne kohomada? Udēni soyāgena āve duppat vunat
 vādagat kellak. mokadda ēkige āti vādagat kama?'
 'anē mage kaṭa'"(Parājitayo.p.107)

('Brother, aren't you ashamed? What is this all about, brother? Udeni doesn't know anything about this yet. But just think if he comes to know?')

'Well, isn't it the same thing as he has done?', Vasanta said smiling. This suggestion of Vasanta gave a shock to Chalani.

'How do you mean? The girl Udeni was going after was respectable though she was poor. But tell me, is this girl respectable?'

'I daren't tell you')

This is a conversation between Chalani and her brother. Her tone is not as rude as that with the servant boy, but it is confidential. She tries to convince the boy that the girl he was meeting was not suitable for him and to express her strong disapproval in the expression 'mokadda ekige vadagatkama?'

(What's her respectability?) The boy is too smart and reminds her of Udeni's behaviour, implying that she was not in a safe position to advise him and at the same time that he did not care for her husband(Udeni). The conversational styles in such works as Charita Tunak and Pitamaha are based on the idiom of the speech of the villagers:

"madäyi hāl sēru tunakut uyala anit pāra gedetṭa kaṇḍa āyimat rāṭa uyanṭa unāyi' bata lipe tiyā istoppuvaṭa pāmīni ammā kīvāya.

'Hāl sēru tunakut ivvada? naraka nā, kī denāda vāḍa kale?'

'koccara ivvat ituru velā nāne bat hāṇḍi dekaḱaṭa vāḍiyen. koheda gamēma inna kollo kurutṭo ṭika hātta piṭinma āvit vahā vātunane etana'

'anika kaṇṭa bāri minihanē Kiristiyan bās'

'mama tun pārakma bat beḍuva. anit pāra nobedā innakoṭa kaṭinma illuvā. kohomaṭavat hāl sēruvakaṭavat vaga kiyanta āti.' (Charita Tunak.p.34)

('This is too bad, I cooked three measures of rice (for lunch) but now I have to cook again for our dinner', my mother said as she was coming from the kitchen after putting the rice on the oven.

'What?' you cooked three measures of rice, that is not bad, how many people came to help with the work?'

'How ever much cooked, not more than two spoonfuls of rice is left. How could there be any more left, when all the children of the village dashed in to eat.'

'And think of Kristiyan Bas, he is such a great eater'

'I served him three times, and when I didn't after that he asked me himself. He must have eaten at least one measure of rice.')

"ōkat oya Iṇduragē kūttu kirillak venḍa ōnā. ūṭa tāma mona vayasakda gānu gaṇḍa? ōka tamayi mama muladima oya

gamana yanavaṭa virudda unē. kohēda, ammaṭayi putāṭayi
ōṇā unē nātāyi pāni hāliya badāganda.'

'ūt kāmāti nam itin monava karaṇḍada? anit eka kellat
āhaṭa kanaṭa varadak āti ekiyakya? ūt dān babak neveyi.
ena duruttaṭa visi hatarakne.'

'visi hatara tiyā hāṭa hatarak unat ū tanē ata ārala kī
dohada, uṃbalaṭa bakkek vagē penunaṭa'"(1)

('Surely this must be another beguiling of Indura. Other-
wise just imagine our son thinking of marriage at his
age. That is why I opposed his going there from the
beginning. But it was you two, mother and son, who made
such a fuss to rush for that 'pot of honey' (to go to
that place hoping it to be marvellous)'

'If he is really keen, what can we do? And also the girl
is not bad looking. And he is no longer a child. He
will be twenty-four by next December.'

'Twenty-four or sixty-four, what ever it might be, it's
not so long, since he stopped being breast-fed, though
you may think that he is a big man.')

Both these passages clearly show that Jayatilaka does
not attempt to mould or elevate the speech of the villagers
in order to protect the aesthetic quality of the novel as some
earlier novelists like Wickramasingha have done. By using the
natural speech like this, in fact he creates a dramatic and
lively effect. Unlike in some of the previous examples, in
these two extracts we cannot emphasise the importance of a
few words or phrases only. Words, phrases, and tone, every
thing suits the characters concerned in the relevant situations.

(1) Jayatilaka, K. Pitmaha. Colombo. 1966. p.39.

The following passages exemplify how Jayatilaka has developed his inspiration from classical prose styles in his later works:

"Pol atu bāṇḍīma ārambhavū svalpa velāvakin devaṭa digē āta ena minis ruvak magē āsa gāsina. ē Indurā Māmā yanuvēn apa visin haṇḍunvanu lābū ammagē mallīya. kalakaṭa ihata Iṇḍurugallen piṭava Vaharaka miniran patalayaka vāḍa kirīmaṭa giya ohu dān temēma minisun yodavā miniran hāravayi." (Pitamaha. p.13)

(A few minutes after the thatching of the roof with cadjans (coconut leaves) had begun I saw the figure of a man coming along the foot-path. That was the younger brother of my mother whom we used to call Indura Mama. He went from Indurugalla to work in a graphite mine in Vaharaka some time ago, and now he employs men in his own mine.

"hituvakkāra kamaṭa giyat, mala kā ābharanayak ē malat samagama gena palaṇḍinnāse demav piyō ovun dedena nobo kalakinma gedaraṭa vāḍa gat_ha." (Pitamaha.p.45)

(Although they eloped, after a short while, the parents received them in their house, just like putting on a rusty ornament rust and all.)

"tāttāge dina cariyāva ārambha vannē itā pāṇḍarini. udā-sana āṇḍen naṅgina undā poravāgena siṭi sarama ekas koṭa vatta hatara vaṭē āvida bhavabhoga sampat vāvena ākāraya parikṣākara balayi. rā vaṭa vāssakin hāmū hulaṅgin palāṭṭiyak idirī peralī gos ātnam eya palamu paridden sakas karayi. loku gasak idirī vāṭi ātnam bhāvanā karannāk men maṇḍa vēlāvak ē desa balā siṭi. min pasu harakun baṇḍina undā devaṭa digē kumburaṭa yayi." (Pitamaha. p.56)

(Father's day begins very early in the morning. After getting up, wearing the same sarong that he wore in bed, he walks around the garden to inspect how crops and plants are growing. If any plant has fallen in the rain and wind in the night, he puts it back in its former position. If a big tree has fallen he will watch it for some time as if meditating. He attends to the cattle after this and goes towards the paddy field down the foot-path.)

This style reminds us of the style in such classical works as Saddharma Ratnavaliya and Saddharmalankaraya. The vocabulary is generally heightened or taken from the 'written' language, and such terms as 'temēma', 'gedaraṭa vādda gat_ha' and 'ānden naṅgina undā' are typical of the language of classical prose works. To add to this Jayatilaka often employs a large number of figures of language, for example, 'mala kã ābharanayak.....' which shows how closely he has followed the style of Saddharma Ratnavaliya. The style thus developed by Jayatilaka is pleasant and lucid but one may ask for what purpose he is employing this particular style in novels such as Charita Tunak, Pitamaha etc. Is it entirely in the hope of developing an individual style or for giving a special effect to the work? The ordinary language of most other contemporary and modern novelists is mainly based on the contemporary spoken language, while such writers as Jayatilaka and Saratchandra concentrate largely on the classical styles. In the dialogues, we have seen that Jayatilaka employs the natural speech of the villagers about whom he writes his novels,

which helps a great deal in dramatic portrayal of character. But in other narrative and descriptive parts he prefers to employ archaic imagery, vocabulary etc., along with new words and imagery. The author of Saddharma Ratnavaliya used the idiom of the villagers in the 14th century. But Jayatilaka writes about his contemporary villagers and tries to use the idiom of the 14th century. This does not seem to be plausible.

From the beginning of the Sinhalese novel most of the prominent writers have been conscious of the importance of language and have tried to develop individual styles. The novelists who came up immediately after the success of Wickramasingha's later works are Amarasekara and Jayatilaka. In our foregoing discussion of their novels and language we could see that these two writers too have tried to develop individual styles for fiction and have been successful in their attempts to some extent. Both of these writers started from where Wickramasingha had developed the language and have not taken very distinct ways from each other at the early stage of their writings. But they have both contributed towards the expansion of the scope of the Sinhalese novel and towards establishing it as a serious artform. They use the resources of the language for artistic aims while concentrating on serious character study. As they began to be prolific and had gained the advantage of having a steady audience they have become careless about the artistic quality of their work and have let the language fall into stagnancy by not bother-

ing to continue with their experiments in language and by exploiting the same kind of experiences and themes. Of these two novelists, Jayatilaka is the more enthusiastic admirer of the classical prose. This aspect of his language is to be seen more often though with less coherence and less effectiveness in his later works. In the style of some of Jayatilaka's later works the blending of the classical vocabulary with that of the speech of villagers carries a tinge of insincerity and inappropriateness. Like Amarasekara's style Jayatilaka's style has been, however, developed to such a level which we can accept as sufficient for the requirements of the kind of novels they are so fond of producing, which can be taken only as mediocre fiction by international standards.

E.R. Saratchandra(b.1914): Modern experiences in lyrical prose.

When we analyse the novels of Saratchandra in the light of the ideas which we considered at the beginning of this chapter, especially those of Stephen Spender, we will find Saratchandra as a novelist linking the contemporary and modern movements in the Sinhalese novel. 'The modern is the past become conscious at certain points', says Spender in his survey of the modern movement. In the works of Joyce, Picasso etc., he sees the great fusion of present and past.(1) Another wellknown critic, G.S.Fraser, expresses a similar view; 'one of the important aspects of that movement was a new reverence

(1) Spender, Stephen. The struggle of the modern. p.79

for the past'.(1)In the most widely discussed novels of Saratchandra, for example, Malagiya Attō (1959)(The Departed) and 'Malavunge' . . . Avurudu Dā (1965) (The Festival Day of the Departed),the main theme is not a reverence for the past or a reassessment of a great past, but experiences of modern man in the general sense of the word. But in a novel like 'Valmatvi Hasarak Nudutim'(1962) (I lost my way and was confounded) there is a clear trace of such reverence and of having recourse to the past. These signs of modernism heighten the novels of Saratchandra above the rest of contemporary Sinhalese fiction, creating a new dimension in it and widening the field of sensibility.

The setting in both Malagiya Attō and Malavunge Avurudu Dā is Japan. Therefore it is easier to discuss these two novels together. In the former the hero,Devendora San, relates his love story with Noriko, a Japanese girl. After travelling in many countries to improve his art and holding exhibitions he goes to Japan to learn traditional Japanese painting. While living in Tokyo he finds Japanese culture fascinating and begins to love it. He realizes before long that he could not become a part of that culture despite his understanding and extreme appreciation of it. This realisation results in a growing feeling of loneliness in Devendora's mind. Then he meets Noriko, a sensitive Japanese girl, who

(1)Fraser,G.S.The Modern Writer and His World. Penguin.1970.p.12

helps him explore and understand the Japanese culture and art. They meet secretly at first, then overcome the fear of society and live through many kinds of experiences struggling to avoid the inevitable question of marriage. Like any other normal girl, Noriko expected not only love, but a permanent companion, though Devendora is reluctant to think of marriage. He thinks that it would raise a lot of unnecessary problems both personal and social, to injure the beauty in his 'dream-land'. Further, he is not quite sure of his love for Noriko. Once assuming that his love is simply sensual, he goes away to Kyoto and tries to find relief through sex. This period of separation becomes a strong trial of his intense love for Noriko. Meanwhile she too tries to understand the problem, to forget Devendora and to get married to a Japanese person. This attempt of both of them does not succeed and they begin to meet again. Noriko's relatives seem to approve of their marriage though with some reluctance. But Devendora is still uncertain of his mind as he looks at his problem not only from an ordinary point of view but from an aesthetic one as well. Noriko embodies the whole of Japanese culture to him, she is a symbol. The real beauty of Noriko, perhaps, exists only in the Japanese background. His aesthetic mind does not allow him to marry Noriko and to take her away from where she really belonged to. At the same time, he perceives the reality of her expectations and gives a vague promise to marry her, and then comes back to Ceylon.

'Malayunge Avurudu Da' is the sequel to this story.

Here the narrator is Noriko. We see the story through her eyes. In the first few chapters most of the incidents are, same as those in Malagiya Atto. They are, however, interesting as they are presented through a different dimension and we can read about some peculiar aspects in Devendora's life about which he has not said anything in Malagiya Atto. As we listen to Noriko we discover some interesting aspects of Devendora's character. Noriko expects a type of love and protection, similar to that she had from her father, from Devendora which he realises and yet refuses to provide. She endures Devendora's strange love as well as his peculiar cruelties towards her for a long time. She prepares to leave her country and come to Ceylon if he wished to marry her. Devendora's mental confusion grows and he pretends not to understand Noriko's problem. One day when Devendora is back in Japan, Noriko loses her temper, quarrels with Devendora and leaves him. The following day when she returns to him, what she found was his dead body. He had died due to an over dose of sleeping tablets.

The love story of Devendora and Noriko is one of the most interesting and moving stories in the Sinhalese novel. Devendora's unusual love for Japan runs through the story with recurrent symbols of the impermanence of human life. The style is extremely lyrical. A strong link which holds the two principal characters together throughout the story is Noriko's

growing belief in Devendora as a person belonging to her own culture though he was not a native by birth. For instance, Devendora proposes one day that they should commit suicide in the traditional Japanese way. This surprised Noriko as she knew that it was extremely difficult for a foreigner to realize the beauty of death in the same way as a Japanese.

The general assumption among critics of these two novels is that they are based mainly on cultural problems. The obvious objection to Devendora's marrying Noriko is cultural. At a closer investigation we may see that there are deeper and subtler reasons. On Devendora's part it is apparent that he did not have strong cultural bonds with his own country. He had been travelling in foreign lands for a long time and had become a sort of international character. His own people did not realize his art and ignored him causing him to retaliate against them. In contrast with this, Japanese society is highly and rapidly westernizing. The young generation in Japan experience the cultural change with more response and understanding than the young generation in a country like Ceylon. Noriko represents some features of this modern Japanese society. Her father did not oppose her relationship with Devendora and her brother and sister too did not have strong objections. If Devendora wished to marry her and live in Japan he could easily do so, as there was no urgent need for him to return to Ceylon. Noriko's fear of a strange society, her doubts about whether she would be able to adapt to Ceylonese society, all arise from the fact that Devendora wanted

to return to Ceylon. Even the suspicions of Noriko about the possibility of being lonely in a new society are not quite convincing. Therefore the cultural issue attributed to these two novels by most Sinhalese critics cannot be accepted as the best approach to them.

From the beginning of their courtship Devendora was not as keen as Noriko on marriage. His vision of life was similar to that of Buddhism. Mere existence itself is an illusion. What is real about life is impermanence and suffering. As life is ever changing one should not have too much hope. Separation is inevitable and painful. As Devendora looked at life from a point of view based on these ideas we cannot expect him to believe in a customary union like marriage. Yet at times he is contradictory. He expects Noriko to be hopeful though he himself does not believe in keeping hope. He thinks of death as a beautiful experience but longs for love; enjoys the pleasures of love and suffers from the pains of love like any other human. Before facing the more serious problems he dies, leaving Noriko to wait for his return. The departed of a family return to the living members on a certain day every year, according to Japanese belief. When her father died Noriko thought it was only a temporary separation as he would return to her on the festival day of the dead. Now that Devendora is departed he too would return to her on the same day, as she believed that he too was one of her own family.

Devendora in Saratchandra's novel is obviously a character

from modern society. He represents trends common to most artists of international mentality and experience along with the national cultural tendencies he inherited as a Sinhalese person. The loneliness one faces in big cities has been the theme of a great number of modern novels in many countries. As we have seen, this is the most significant characteristic of Devendora too. Thus Saratchandra, while dealing with a modern theme attempts to heighten the taste of the Sinhalese reader from a stagnant, parochial level to an international one.

'Valmatvi Hasarak Nuduṭimi' (1962)(I lost my way and was confounded) was widely discussed and criticised but seems to have failed to gain such popularity as the two other novels of Saratchandra. At a first reading it would seem to be a dull work. One critic calls it 'an unpleasant story'.(1)

Readers were highly impressed by the first novel of Saratchandra, its terse style charged with poetry, intimacy of narrative, newness of experience, all of which had thrilled the Sinhalese reader who expected another novel of the same qualities from him. But this work, 'Valmativi Hasarak Nudutimi', was a complete disappointment for most of them due to the staleness of some of the story and the vague depiction of some of the characters. The social stratum presented in this novel is the westernized bourgeoisie who did not have clear connections either with indigenous or western cultures, though they tended usually more towards the latter in their explicit

(1) See Vimansa.Vol.4. Article by Gamini Seneviratne.

behaviour . Although the hero and some other characters come from this society, in this novel there are persons drawn from many other circles in Ceylonese society. Figures such as Sirimanna, Upali and Sonny are examples of these various characters in Valamatvi Hasarak Nudutimi, who represent some special features of modern Ceylonese society.

The ideas and aspects put forward through these characters are, we must admit at the outset, not entirely new in the Sinhalese novel. In the novels of Martin Wickramasingha and Gunadasa Amarasekara similar ideas and characters are to be found. As the novel progresses towards its climax, we feel that Saratchandra is trying to introduce some new ideas about the cultural conflicts and spiritual predicament of the modern Ceylonese middle classes. We cannot directly presume that Saratchandra's attempt was to show the first signs of the collapse of this society, though at times we find some implications tending to such a conclusion.

Victor and his friends are brought up in a special social background and their specialized education helped them to cultivate a growing interest for wide and avid reading of various authors and philosophies etc. This premature knowledge and curiosity is, perhaps, one of the main reasons for the later confusions and quickly changeable ideas of Victor, Upali and their friends. Sometimes we feel here that Hermann Hesse has exerted some influence on Saratchandra. Especially, when we consider the friendship of Victor and Upali we recall some

characters in his novels such as Demian and Narzis and Goldmund. The philosophical and personal reverence of Victor for Upali and the later influence of Upali on Victor's life is somewhat similar to the relationship of Emil Sinclair and Max Demian in Hesse's Demian.

Towards the end of the story most of these 'idealists' get disillusioned with their diverse beliefs and doctrines as a result of the experiences they have of life. Upali is, apparently, the only one who persistently continues with a firm objective of investigating the 'truth'. From the beginning we see a tendency in him towards following things closer to his origins rather than imported and transplanted ideas from foreign lands. He changes his field of education from English, Greek, Latin etc., to Sinhalese, Pali, Sanskrit etc., goes to India to learn ancient philosophy and mysticisms and comes home to live a strange life with poor villagers in a far away region. His friend Victor has similar ideals at first but does not try to escape from his family circle, becomes a doctor, marries, goes to England, studies the behaviour of the Sinhalese community in London more than the life of the English people and comes back home, to be forced to divorce his wife. Upali gets fed up with all his previous philosophical investigations and tries to discover a precious past in his own culture by educating the people in a remote village. But Victor in his confusion does not see any meaning in his past behaviour, in Upali's ideas or in the whole system around him.

When they reach this confused and bewildered state the reader begins to wonder whether these young intellectuals ever had any real problems. If they could achieve a deep understanding of some alien cultures and doctrines why could they not understand their own culture, religion and people? It is not easy to believe that philosophers like Krishna Murti or Schopenhauer really got into their minds and that their ideas really mattered to them or affected their real intentions. Can't we think that Victor was just dragged into this situation by his friends and that there was no intrinsic urge in him to bother himself with meditations, philosophical discussions etc? Let us, for example, consider Sita's character. When Victor first met her she was an ardent organiser of a philosophical society whose main concern was Krishna Murti. Soon after meeting Victor, her interest in Krishna Murti diminished and finally she gave up even going to the meditation classes. At an earlier stage Victor was interested in learning about new biological discoveries and wrote letters to such scientists as Julian Huxley, not, however, out of pure interest in science but out of his personal needs, to verify whether he could marry his first cousin, Monica. Another example is his short lived interest in Marxism while he was in London.

Thus, there is some air of insincerity about all the main characters in this novel. Sometimes they seem to us like hypocrites and not to contribute any thing to improve the artistic quality of the work. Among the many minor characters,

such people as Sirimanna and his wife Rani have been sincerely depicted and they appeal to our minds more impressively than the major roles.

Like many other novelists in world literature Saratchandra too embodies his experiences gained during his travels abroad in his novels. In *Malagiya Atto* and *Malavunge Avurudu Da*, he draws such clear and impressive pictures of Japanese culture and life that the reader becomes fascinated with it to the extent of falling in love with Japan as Devendora himself did. About half of the story in *Valmatvi Hasarak Nudutimi* is set in London. As mentioned before, the author makes it a good opportunity to express his views on the life of the fairly large Ceylonese community in London without obstructing the smooth flow of the narrative. In the pacifying effects of the Japanese life and culture in Tokyo Devendora finds a perpetual refuge for his sensitive life, while Victor finds the gloomy, unfriendly atmosphere in London contaminating his soul and morals. In the same novel, Saratchandra includes some of his experiences in India, when Upali and his friends go there for a philosophy conference. As a novelist who has travelled widely in the world and lived abroad for a considerable time Saratchandra's attempt at including his own experiences in his novels has resulted in making his contemporary writers aware of the fact that it is time for them to spread the boundaries of their literature beyond the remote shores of the island towards the outer world.

The language in the novels of Saratchandra is poetic, individual and of unprecedented beauty. His style is almost unique. Let us consider a few passages:

"mudu molok vacanayakin sangrahayak nolāba mā gatakala nisarū jīvitayehi ādarayaka piliruvak vat lābune Meme-vakāgenya. mā āgen sevuyē sābā ādaraya nova, ādaraye vyājayaki. ā ebandak mā idiriyehi tabanṭa vāyam kalāya. eya biṇḍa dāmmē māya. ādaraye pratirūpaya ādarayaṭa vadā hoṇḍaya. sābā ādaraya jīvitayē patulaṭa kiṇḍābāsa ehi āti dukin tāvareyi,. ādarayē vyājaya jīvitaya matupiṭa pāveyi. eya krīḍavaki. eyin ālum bāṇḍum haṭagannē nāta. nalu nili dedena naluves darāgena naṭana bava avabōdha kaṭa yutuya. ekeku anikāgē vēsaya galavā muhuna desa balanṭa tāṭ kirīma vāradiya. esē kirīma, ē krīḍāve ni-yogayanṭa viruddhaya."(1)

(In my desperate life where there was not even a single word of tenderness, it was only from Mamevaka that I had at least an illusion of love. What I expected from her was such an illusion of love, but not a true love. She tried to provide me with that. But I destroyed it. The reflection of love is always better than the reality. The real love goes right down to the bottom of life and smears itself with the pains existing there. The illusion of love floats on the surface of life. It is only a game. No emotional attachments result from it. The actor and actress, however, should realize that they are only acting. It is against the rules of the game to unmask and to look at the faces of each other.)

The ease with which Saratchandra controls his language is notable. Very short sentences such as 'eya kridavaki' (It

(1) Saratchandra, Edirivira. Malagiya Atto. Colombo.1969.p.116

is a game) and 'eya biñda dämmē māya'(It was I who destroyed it) create a beautiful balance in the style. Also the power and beauty of such phrases as 'muḍu molok vacana', (soft, tender words) and 'āḍaraye vyājaya'(the illusion of love) are noteworthy as characteristic of this style. The objectivity is impressive and ironic at the same time, which is another significant feature in Saratchandra's style.

The intimate, melancholic tone in the words of Noriko is implicit in the style in 'Mala vunge Avurudu Da' as seen in this example:

"mā dān balā siṭinnē malavunge avrudu dā pāminena tekya. edā mā piyāno peralā melovaṭa eti. mevara ohu rañḍavā-gata nohākinam mama ohu kāṭuva yaṇṭa sārāsennemi. Nakajima sohonāṭa ātulvaṇṭa mātula vū āsāva mevara sansindavā gannemi. epamanaki maṭa dān šeṣavi āttē. mā Devendōrāsanta anēka vārayak kiyā yāvvē nopamāva eṇṭa kiyāya. ehet ohu no āvēya. dān mā patamin siṭinne malavunge avurudu dā nopamāva pāminēva kiyāya. malavungē avurudu dā mage āsā nusun koṭa enabava mama dān dannemi."(1)

(I am now waiting for the arrival of the Festival Day of the Dead. My father will return to this world that day. If I cannot make him stay with me this time, I shall try to go with him. This time I shall fulfil my desire to enter the Nakajima cemetery. That is all I have left. Several times I have written to Devendōrasan asking him to come back immediately. But he has not come. Now I am hoping that the Festival day of The Dead will come quickly. Now I know that day will come, to fulfil my hope.)

(1) Saratchandra, Edirivira. Malavunge Avurudu Da. Colombo. 1965. p.1

A melodious tone similar to this can be found throughout the whole novel. Some time it is like a sad song. The combination of words and phrases from classical prose with Sanskrit words, unlike in some earlier novelists' styles is not inappropriate, but creates a sweet harmony. The incidents of the story are symbolic and they require a musical style like this to achieve their full meaning:

"māsayakin pamana ohu citra dahayak pamana ānda ek iridā dāvasaka ēvā polova mata diga hāra maṭa pennuvēya, magē ās idiriyehi kisiyam prātihāryayak siduvūvak men magē siyolaṅga kilipolā giyēya. ohu magē janma bhūmiyehi sittaru parapuren pāvata ena kenek novēḍāyi kiyā maṭa situni. mama ohu desa bāluvemi. ohu kaluvanya. ohugē nāsaya usayā. ehet ohugē dāsa etaram visāla nāta. eya magē raṭe kenekuge net yuvalak novetiyi kiva nohāki taramaya. ohu mapiyānange doterāva ānda siṭī, ohu magē basin maṭa doḍayi. magē basin haḍavat rakavalun amatā doragulu aravā gattēya. āttenma āścaryayaki. adbhūtayaki. mapiyānange cavivarnayada kaluya. mohugē cavi varnaya hā mapiyānange cavivarnayada atara etaram venasak nāta. mohu mage raṭēma dakunu dūpataka keneku viya hākiya. ohu āve dakṣina disāvenya. dakṣina nippon dūpatakin viyayutuya." (Malavunge Avurudu Da. p.72.)

(After finishing about ten paintings within about a month, one Sunday, opening them on the floor he displayed them to me. As if witnessing a sudden miracle, my body quivered. I wondered if he did not belong to the indigenous lineage of the artists of my own country. I looked at him. He is dark. His nose is prominent. But his eyes are not big. They are almost similar to the eyes of a person of my own country. He wears my father's 'dotera'. He speaks to me in my own tongue. He made the sentries

at the gates of my heart open the doors for him by addressing them in our own language. It is, indeed, a wonder. It is a miracle. My father's complexion is dark. There's not much difference between their complexions. He comes, perhaps, from a southern island of my own country. Possibly from a southern Nippon island.)

The poetry of the language, in this passage, for example, lies in the repetition of some words and phrases. Words such as 'ascaryayaki' and 'adbhutayaki' (a wonder, a miracle) remind us of the style in such classical works as Butsarana and Amavatura. The incident related in this passage is of symbolic significance made effective through the sentimentality in the language. Noriko's attachment to Devendorasan was not based on common grounds but was on a deeper level. His character was fascinating to her mainly through his unusual appreciation of Japanese culture. This fact made her believe that he would understand her mind better than a Japanese person. At the same time she considers him as similar to a Japanese person in his physical appearance too. He reminds her especially of her father, who was the most important attachment in her life. Thus we can understand the psychology of the strong love of Noriko for Devendorasan. He combined both her father and lover to Noriko.

The long novel 'Valmatvi Hasarak Nuduṭimi' lacks the poetic beauty of the narrative style in the other two novels though there are some sporadic exhibitions of skilful mastery over language as is seen in the following passages:

"dumriya piṭatva giya kenehima Upāli tama hisa ātulāṭa damā gattēya. kavuluvalin eliyaṭa damana lada muhunu rāsiya desada vānena at rāsiya desada mama balāgena siṭiyemi. dumriya nopenī yana tek mā balā siṭiyada mama ohu yalit nuduṭuvemi. tava bohō kalakaṭa maṭa ohu dakinṭa nolābena bava maṭa itā balavat lesa pratyakṣa vūyē evē-lehiya. siyalla siduvūye kotaram hadisiyenda kiyatot maṭa ē gāna sitanṭa vat iḍak nolābuni. mā āpasu hārī yanta piṭavū viṭa maṭa dānune mā jivitayē venama maṅgakaṭa pā tābu bavakya. metek mā gaman kala man peta avasan viya. itiri koṭasa soyāganṭa tibe. soyāgena eya ossē mā gaman kalayutte hudakalāvaya. mā nodānuvatvama Monikāge magat magē maṅgin āt vīgena giyēya. ehet Upālige maṅga hā magē maṅga yalit ek novēyayi maṭa viśvāsa kala nohāki viya. siduvaṇṭa yannē mā situ deyaṭa venas ekak viya hākiya. ehet Upālige iranama kavādā namut iṣṭaviya yutuyayi mama ādahuyemi. kisiveku noyana mārگا ossē mesē ohu apūru andamaṭa elavanu labanne iranama visin yayi mama situvemi." (1)

(Soon after the train pulled out Upali took in his head. I kept on looking at many other faces at the windows of the train and at the hands being waved. Although I kept looking until the train disappeared I could not see him again. It was only at that moment that I knew that I wouldn't be able to see him for a long time. All this had happened so quickly that I had not time even to contemplate over it. When I started to leave the station I realized that I was taking a different path in life. I had reached the end of one section of my path. Now I have to find the rest of it. When I find it I will have to walk all alone. Monica's way diverted from mine even without my realizing it. But what I cannot believe

(1) Saratchandra, Edirivira. Valamatvi Hasarak Nuduṭimi. Colombo. 1962. pp.150/151

is that Upali's and my ways will not meet again. What is going to happen now, may be something I had never expected. I hoped that Upali would reach his goal one day. I thought that it was his fate which led him like this along strange paths not taken by any one else before.)

The sincerity and emotional tone appeal to our mind.

Upali, the moral guide of Victor, the narrator, is leaving the country. Victor expresses some of his feelings when he went to the station to see his friend off. From the beginning Upali had not been dependent on his friends since he was independent in his thought. He liked to explore new ideas while his friends like Victor expected guidance from him, admiring him as a hero. Now he is going away and Victor sees that he is left behind to fight his battle alone. At moments like these it is natural to find one's heart filling with various sentiments. He remembers his lost love, Monica whom he could not possess because she was his first cousin. Upali and Monica were the most important persons in Victor's life in this period and now he has lost both of them. Quite reasonably he thinks 'now I have to find the rest of the path.'

Here is a completely different situation from the above one, in which human behaviour is presented in much clearer perspective:

"Sani sindu kiyanta paṭan gattēya. ohugē muvin piṭavūyē kalaka Ingirisi katākarana tarunayan bailāvakaṭa haravāgena gāyū hindi citrapaṭa sinduvaki. ehet ohuṭa eka svarayakvat hariyaṭa gāyanākala nohākiviya. tamā gayannē

visvarayen bava ohu nodatteya. maṭa lajjā āti viya.
 Tess ohuṭa sināsēyayi mama situvemi. kumak karaṇṭa dāyi
 maṭa notērē. Sanī vāradīyaṭa gayana hava ohuṭa aṅgavan-
 ṭada mama akamātivīmi. ehet mohotakin Tess sapattu
 kuṭṭama gasā damā, mēs piṭin naṭaṇṭa paṭan gattāya. ā
 dālaṭa dāta digukaramin, atla vihiḍuvā karakavamin, bella
 naṭavanṭa tāṭ karannāse urahisa solavamin, kāmaraya purā
 karanam gasaṇṭa vūvāya. āgē muhunehi itā jugupsa janaka
 sināvaka ārūḍha vī tibuni." (Valmatvi Hasarak Nudutimi.
 p.140)

(Then Sonny began to sing. The song he sang was a Hindi film-song which the young English speaking men used to sing as a 'baila'. But he could not even sing a solitary note properly. And also he was unaware that he was singing out of tune. I was ashamed. I thought that Tess might laugh at him. I did not know what to do. I did not even like to indicate to Sonny that his singing was not in tune. But suddenly, shoving off her shoes, Tess started to dance with her socks on. Opening and stretching her arms, turning her open palms round and round, shaking her shoulders as if she were trying to twist her neck, she rocked and rolled all over the room. There was a repulsive smile on her face.)

In this style the power of creating an atmosphere of verisimilitude is very high. Our knowledge of Sonny and Tess, accumulated through the previous happenings, are more strongly justified by this situation. They are both 'lower' in taste and culture than Victor and Sita according to the latter's opinion. Here, Sonny, Tess and Victor all of them are drunk, they need some light entertainment, dancing, singing etc. Victor criticises Sonny's singing and Tess's dancing since it was a new experience to him who was used to do everything in

'style'. Sonny does not care about the tune while Victor thinks it very important, showing that he was not easily adaptable to new situations. Nor does he appreciate Tess's dance as he says it was repulsive to him. This repulsion runs through a large part of the story hereafter, especially with regard to Victor's relations with Tess, for example, his feelings after going to bed with her and later his attempts at preventing Sonny marrying Tess. Words such as 'karanam gasanta vuvaya' (rocked and rolled) and 'jugupsa janaka' (repulsive) in the above passage are suggestive of these ideas.

Now let us consider a few passages from Saratchandra's novels to discuss some other aspects in his descriptive style:

"ē raṭaṭa pāmīni vahāma maṭa hāṅgunē, bālubālū ata vividha varnayan dāsa pinavana vena raṭak mā dāka nāti bavaya. gini peṭṭiya, tē kōppaya vāni tamā pāvicci karana sāma kuḍā deyakaṭama apūru hāḍayak damā, vicitra varnayak kavā savundaryayen vaṭavī jīvatvīma Japanun agaya karana paramārtayak bava maṭa peneyi. savundaryayen yut parisa-rayaka viśīma sitāngi samata kirīmehi lā kotaram upayōgi vannakda? kaḍayakaṭa sāppuvakaṭa giyada, sīruvaṭa nirmānaya karanalada kisiyam suvundaryayakin indriyayo pibideti. yantrayē upakārayen kerena nirasa jīvitayaṭa vuvada ovuhu rasayak ātulat karati. pāhapat varnayan kavā vātaye bīrāni gatiya pahakara damati. sit pit nāti yantraya tula ovuhu manuṣya hrudayak tānpat karati. ketaram yantra pāvicci kalat, tamā ganudenu karanē yantra sūtra samaga nova manuṣyayan samagaya yana hāṅgīma kenekuṭa ātivē." (Malagiya Atto.p.6)

(Soon after arriving in that country I felt that I had seen no other country which so pleased the eye with

various colours as this one. I saw that Japanese people try to live surrounded by beautiful things, for instance, by giving nice colours and shapes even to such small things as the tea-cup and the box of matches. How helpful it is to live in a place full of beauty for the fulfilment of one's wishes. Your senses will be delighted even at a stall or a shop with skilfully created beautiful things. They even make dull mechanical life interesting. They use bright colours to make the bleak air pleasant. Inside lifeless machines, they place a human heart, so that one feels that one is dealing with humans, and not with machines.)

In this somewhat sentimental style Saratchandra describes Devendora's first impressions of Tokyo. He describes some of the most conspicuous attractions in that city. Consider the repeated allusions to colours. This is because Devendora is an artist. Colours, shapes, patterns are the most important elements in the life of an artist. The first thing he mentions is that 'where ever you look in that city, your eye is gratified with bright colours. The dignified style suits the delighted, highly impressed mental state of the narrator. Through Saratchandra's use, we find a new beauty, new power in some Sinhalese words. The combination of words in the phrases, 'balu balu ata vividha varnayen dasa pinavana', 'siruvata nirmanaya karanalada' and 'sit pit nati yantraya tula..' are good examples of using words from different layers of the language in order to express modern ideas, preserving both power and poetry.

"Tokyo koy taram amutuda? ehi viśeṣa suvaṇḍak tibē. viduli

kōcciyakaṭa nāngat, senaga atarin āviddat, maṭa nitara
ē suvaṇḍa dānē. Kiyotōvala siṭi mulu avurudda tuladi
maṭa evāni suvaṇḍaḱ dānunē nāta. dān ē suvaṇḍin magē
gata sita pibideyi. bohō kalakaṭa nodānuna vidiye prīti-
suvayak mā ātulehi pātirī yayi."(Malagiya Atto.p.131)

(How different Tokyo is! There exists a special scent
about it. While getting into an electric train or walk-
ing through the crowds I always feel that scent. I had
not felt such a scent at Kyoto during the whole year I
was there. A pleasant feeling of happiness, which I had
known for a long time, permeates within me.)

In the previous example we saw that Devendora's impression
of Tokyo was mostly of an aesthetic nature. Through occasional
descriptions of the city this aspect is entwined with the cen-
tral theme. In this passage there is no physical description of
this city. Instead it gives an idea of the feelings of Deven-
dora when he came back to Tokyo after being away for a year.
In Kyoto he spent a sort of exile's life which was a self-
punishment in a way. As soon as he came back, the old memories
about Tokyo return to his mind. Consider the repetition of the
word 'suvanda'(the scent) which is suggestive of all the sweet
memories and sentimental attachments he is nurturing for Tokyo.
'Suvanda' is a 'romantic' type of Sinhalese word mostly admired
by the folk poet, for example:

"suvaṇḍa bojun vālaṇḍū mage himi saṇḍuṭa
nibaṇḍa bojun rasakara dun valaṇḍaṇṭa
suvaṇḍa palāpala vāviyan himiyanṭa
suvaṇḍa maḷ nitara tibiyan ran kaṇḍaṭa"(1)

(1)Yasodaravata. Sirisāra Press. Ginigathena. n.d. p.11

(To my Lord who was used to sweet smelling food,
Often I prepared sweet tasting food,
May there be sweet smelling fruits for my Lord,
May there be sweet smelling flowers for my Lord.)

By thus repeating the word 'suvanda' the folk poet creates an idea of the feelings in the mind of the heart-broken Queen of Prince Siddhartha, after he left the place to attain Buddhahood. When she refers to everything about him as scented we feel the tenderness and pleasure and also the respect in her feelings about her husband. In contrast with this, in the passage from Malagiya Atto we find the same word used slightly differently. We are not informed where that 'fragrance' emerged from. But we realize that it is the fragrance of Devendora's love. After his return from Kyoto it took some time for Devendora to meet Noriko again. Without losing hope he wanders about in town trying to recall some sweet memories about Noriko. During these lonely walks full of suspense and doubt he feels this particular scent in Tokyo. He realizes one day that Tokyo has actually changed for him. As he walks alone he tries to find a restaurant which was the favourite place of himself and Noriko. He could not find it as it had been pulled down to build a new one:

"mē āranciya asā magē sitehi mahat kanassalak ātiviya.
mā Tokiyoṽaṭa āvit ehi giya avurudde tibunu dē sevīma
nispala vāyamak bava maṭa penini..."(Malagiya Atto.p.145)

(A deep sorrow was born in my mind after hearing this. It seemed to me it was useless now, for me, to look for those things in Tokyo which existed there last year.)

Through the physical changes that had taken place in Tokyo during his absence, Devendora implies how his sensations about Tokyo had also changed. Soon after his return to Tokyo he knew that Noriko had changed, or at least she pretended that she wished to avoid Devendora's company. So he thinks that it was not only some of his favourite features in that city but also his love that had changed. These examples may help us understand how Saratchandra, like a skilful craftsman, makes use of descriptions with meaningful coherence with the central theme of the novel.

A comparison of the following passages will show how Saratchandra tries to depict character through description:

"prīti vū avastāvehi Norikoge muhuna taram pāhapat muhunak mā dāka nāti taranya. ē vagēma dukin peluna viṭa āgē muhuna taram malānika muhunakda mā dāka nāta. ā duka sāpa dekehimā eka samāna tiyunu āsvādayak viṇḍinnīyayi maṭa sitina".(Malagiya Atto. p.83)

(I hadn't seen any other face as gay and sparkling as Noriko's when she was happy. In the same way when she was unhappy, I hadn't seen any other face as gloomy as her's. I supposed that she was equally sensitive to both suffering and happiness.)

"Devendorāsange citta santānaya kriyā kalē apūru lesakināyi maṭa hāṅguni. ohu vinōda vanṭa kāmāttā sē maṭa penini. ehet vinoda vanaviṭa ohuge muhune pilibiṁbu vannē prītiyak nova biyakāyi maṭa sitē. prakrutiyeṇ visālavū ohugē denet vaḍāt visāla vannāse maṭa pene. ohugē detola viyālī yayi. muhuna mālave. biyē salakunu daknaṭa nāti viṭat ohugē somnasa tula sāṅgavuna domnasak nitara ātāyi maṭa sitē. ohu maranaya gāna nitara doḍayi".(Malavunge Avurudu-Da.p.9)

(It occurred to me that Devendora's mind worked in a very interesting way. I imagined sometimes that he liked enjoyment very much. But I think that it is not happiness but fear that is reflected in his face when he tries to enjoy himself. Then I see his eyes, which are naturally large, become even larger. And his lips dry up. His face withers. Even at the moments when there are no obvious signs of fear, I feel that there is a submerged sadness beneath his happiness. He speaks about death quite often.)

In the first passage we see Noriko through Devendora's eyes. And in the second it is through the eyes of the former we see the latter. The most significant feature of Noriko's character is her acute sensitivity. This is implied by saying that she was equally sensitive to both suffering and happiness, which is obviously the main attraction of her for Devendora. It was only with a girl like Noriko that he could explore the art and culture of Japan. In her own simple way of enjoyment she appreciates Devendora's love, despite its many unsympathetic aspects. In the second passage we get a clear picture of Devendora. By the disciplined tone of the style, we can see Noriko's observation of his character. We feel that Devendora is almost incapable of enjoying himself, as he often spoke and thought of death.

In the above passage from *Malagiya Atto*, there are only three sentences of moderate length. But they convey most important, subtle information about Noriko. The balance of the phrases, 'pāhapat muhuna' and 'malānika muhuna' (the bright face, the gloomy face), and beautiful combinations of

words such as 'duka sāpa dekehma tiyunu āsvādayak' (an acute enjoyment in both suffering and happiness) are characteristic of Saratchandra's language. Mostly his sentences are short and he prefers using simple words. In the second example above, except for a few words such as 'citta santatiya' (the working of the mind) and 'prakrutiye' (by nature) all the other words are very simple. But through these simple words a very deep probing into the character has been achieved.

Because of the lyrical quality in the language these two novels (Malagiya Atto and Malavunge Avuruda Da) can be read as prose poems:

"vasantayē mudu hirū rasmiyen vikasita vū Sakurā kusum
men mā tula pibiduna abhinava ālaya mama edā ohugē
hadavat pudasuna mata tabā ohuṭa kāpa kalemi."

(Malavunge Avurudu Dā.p.59)

"ehet ohu yaṇṭa tīranaya koṭa ātnam pamā novī giya taramaṭa
mānavayi mama sānasunemi.pamā novī giya taramaṭa pamā novī
yalit hamuviya hākiya." (Malavunge Avurudu Dā.p.78)

('On the altar of his heart I offered the new born love
in my heart like the Sakura blossom in the soft rays of
the Spring sun.'

'I consoled myself by thinking that it was so much
better for him to leave as soon as possible if he had
already so decided. The earlier the separation the
sooner will be the reunion, though it is not known when
or where.'

This prose pleases us like a melodious song. In the slow-moving rhythm of the second example, the whole vision of life of the novel is implicit, as in various other descriptions and

reflective parts. Devendora talks of going away soon in order to come back earlier. For him 'going away' is inevitable. This has a symbolic connection with the theme of death in these two novels. Devendora talks happily about death, Noriko waits for the return of her dead father and finally, Devendora himself joins the 'dead'. He is buried in the 'Nakajima' cemetery, where Noriko too hoped to be buried.

The poetry and musicality in the language is not a superficial ornamentation for Saratchandra. There is life, human predicament in the modern world and the novelist's sensibility involved in his lyrical style. Inspiration of classical prose, though the general structure of sentences is mostly modern, is the most significant and successful feature in Saratchandra's style. In a situation as follows we can learn how this poetic style fits in with the theme of these two novels:

"ehet edā rātriyehi ruppāvala hiṇḍagena gī gayamin ramanaya kala nuvarun atara prīti pramodayen visagna vū kalakmen nihaṇḍava ohu samaṅga sakman karamin hun vēlehi apa deḍena sīna lovaka sārī sarannavun sē penunada matu mattehi kumak vetat yovun viyehi maṭa mēsā asvāda viṇḍiṇṭa lābīma mahat bhāgyakyayi kalpanā kalemi. māligā prākārāya asala vū vē maṅga, mudunehi unun veta nām̐buru vū atu pata-ra āti sakurā vrukṣayangen gāvasīgat depasin hebiyē malin gotana lada uḍu viyanin alankruta vū ekama dīrgha liya maḍullak sē viya. ohugē hāma avayavayakin mamannāsē vū nisasala suvaya magē āngaṭada nodānuvatva vādī ehi pāti-rayana lesak maṭa dānuni. avurudu ganānāvakma Sakurā balanṭa mā gos tibū namut ēvāye savundarya desa magē sita niyama lesa yomu vūyē mē vatāvē pamani."

(Malavunge Avurudu Dā.p.102)

(Although it seemed to me that the two of us were like dwellers in a dream world while I was quietly strolling with him as if overwhelmed with great ecstasy, among the gaily singing citizens under the trees, I thought that whatever may happen in the future, I am very fortunate to be able to enjoy myself like this, in my youth. The path along the wall of the palace was sheltered from both sides with branches of Sakura trees, forming a long thicket like a floral ceiling. A soothing pleasure emanating from every part of his body, quite unintentionally, seemed to be entering into my body and permeating it. I had gone to see Sakura blossom several times before, but it was only at this time that I perceived its beauty properly.)

Even a Sinhalese reader who is not quite familiar with the classical Sinhalese prose would know that this style is not based on the general modern style of fiction. The opening sentence 'ehet eda ratriyehi.....' and phrases such as 'yovun viyehi mata mesa asvada vindinta labima' etc., are reminiscent of the prose of the 13th century. With the help of this style Saratchandra creates a picture which is homogeneous with Noriko's experience at this particular time and also with the aesthetic quality of the theme. The relationship of Noriko and Devendora was of a level between fantasy and reality. Sometimes both of them behave as if they are scared of the reality. On this occasion the natural atmosphere has been described in this dignified but highly individual style, revealing the subtle nature of their love. As the classical prose was mostly used to relate imaginary and romantic stories, it

still carries those implications to a large extent. In novels like *Malagiya Atto* and *Malavunge Avurudu Da*, this language can be used, as the theme is partly romantic and also they are set in a foreign country and most of the characters are not Sinhalese. If the words in this passage were heard from a modern Sinhalese girl, the effect would have been different.

Although the words and phrases are from classical prose, the expected result is gained through redolent suggestive meanings. When Noriko says that they were walking like two dwellers in a dream world, and tells how other citizens enjoyed themselves under Sakura trees, we feel the higher, aesthetic state of their love. Their affection was so strong, pure and different from the common type that they attained such a pleasure, which is far above reality, by mere nearness to each other, by feeling each other's presence. Noriko feels a strange, but pacifying pleasure transfusing from his body to hers. But with all this, she is a human being after all, so the reality appears for a moment in her mind, she thinks of her future which is obscure and tries to forget it as she knew that she must be content with this particular moment. The beauty of nature, the Sakura flowers, the cool night air draws her attention back to the fantasy.

In the language in '*Valmatvi hasarak nuduṭimi*' though it lacks the finesse and artistic consistency of the two other novels, a great variety of styles have been employed. This

may be the result of the more realistic themes and the shift of the scenes to different locations and the large number of characters in this novel. For instance:

"Candrasēkara kiyana eka ätta, Vikṭa, 'brahmavid brahmaiva bhavati' kiyala tiyanavāne. ēka tamayi Bhāratīya dārśanayē itāma vādagat padanama. baṭahira dārśanaya vagē novē. parama satyaya avabodha karagānīmaṭa, ē parama satyaya hā ekvenna ōnā. piṭa iṇḍala balala tarkānukūlava āti karagannā avabodhaya niyama pratyakṣāvabodhayak novē. ē nisā niyama dārśanikayā, tamā dārśanaya pasak kara gattu kenek venna ōnāya kiyana eka ätta."

(Valmatvi Hasarak Nudutimi.
p.120)

(Victor, it is true what Chandrasekara says.. Haven't you heard that 'he who knows the Brahma(the truth), is himself a Brahma'. This is the most important basis of the Indian philosophy. It is different from Western philosophy. You must become one with the ideal truth to understand it. Learning it while being away from it is not real perception. Therefore it is true that the real philosopher must have perceived his own philosophy.)

This is one example of the many philosophical discussions in this novel. Despite the use of some Sanskrit words which are natural in such discussions, the style is pleasant and lively, the reason being its close affinity with general conversational language. Even in a description meant for humour and irony Saratchandra's style is restrained:

"Pilimatalāva mātiniya uḍaraṭa osariya āṇḍa siṭi, mādiviya ikmavū striyak vūvāya. āgē uḍukaya pamanāṭa vaḍā visālayayi āya duṭu vigasa maṭa situni. kenekugē dāsa ibēma āḍigiyē āgē mahat lāma pedesa desaṭaya. āgē piyayuru mandala hāṭṭayat samaṅga kaḍāvātenṭa onna menna kiyā

tibennāsē avadānam aḍiyaka pāvātuna heyin, sāma denāgēma sālakilla ē desataḍḍīgiyā sē viya. mē kesē vuvada ā sinā-sunu viṭa āgē muhunaṭa kisiyam piyakaru vilāsayak ārūḍha viya. aḍak nivīgiya rāgāgniyeṇ yut āgē dāsa, jīvāna suvaṇḍin varin vara ḍālvēnnāse muhuna mata iṇḍahiṭa bābaluni."(Valmatvi Hasarak Nudutimi. p.90)

(Mrs. Pilimatalava was wearing a Kandyan Sari, and she was just past middle age. I thought that her upper body was too big, as soon as I saw her. One's eye is inevitably drawn towards her large bosom. Every one's attention is drawn towards her breasts since they seemed to be on the verge of falling down along with her blouse. However this may be, when she smiles, her face becomes attractive. Her eyes with half faded sexual desire reflected in them, shone on her face from time to time as if they were occasionally lightened with the smell of life.)

The disappointment of the narrator with the physical appearance of the lady is the first thing that strikes us as we read this passage. When he says that she was just past her middle age, it seems that he is trying to simplify the rashness of the subsequent sarcastic statements. He says that the first impression he had of her was that her bust was too big in proportion to the lower part of her body. With the intended humour this implies that his attitude is not going to be in favour of her. The image created by saying that her breasts looked as if they were going to fall off is only a distortion of a figure of language in ancient poetry. The ancient poet, to indicate the largeness of a lady's breasts would say that her chest span was too small in relation to the size of her

breasts.(1) By distorting this figurative saying which conveys a pleasant feeling, Saratchandra makes the reader laugh.

The conversational style in Saratchandra's novels has two aspects: In 'Malagiya Atto' and 'Malavunge Avurudu Da' a somewhat stylised dialogue is used which blends well with poetic quality of the rest of the style. The conversational style in 'Valmatvi Hasarak Nudutimi' is more or less similar to that in other contemporary Sinhalese novels. This is the natural spoken language of the present time. Provincial and regional dialectical differences are not so distinct in the Sinhalese novel as in the English novel. (Novels of Joyce and Lawrence can be mentioned as examples.) A slight touch of regional idiom is seen in the works of such Sinhalese novelists as Wickramasingha, Amarasekara etc., but it is difficult to see any such traces in Saratchandra's work. As a result of the special nature of theme and characters in 'Malagiya Atto' and 'Malavunge Avurudu Da', Saratchandra could easily use a moulded form of conversational language. But at times we find quite natural conversations as follows:

"'monavada Devendorāsanta kāmata hāduveyi, ohu Norikogen āsiya.

'Devendorāsan Japan kāmata kāmāti hinda Susi hāduva.'

'mama gihilla bīra gēnnada?'

'epā, Sake tiyenavā, Devendorāsan Sakē valata kāmatinē bīra valata vadā' yi Noriko magen āsuvāya.

(1) See Siyabaslakara Vistara Varnanava, ed. Gnanasiha Tera. Colombo. 1964. p.5. Verse.55

'ovu, ättenma mamanan kämati Sakēvalaṭa tamayi, Norikosan vāḍakarana avan halē Sakē nāne?'

'Devendorāsan hariyaṭa Japankārayek vagēmayi,' 'āgē piyā madahasin yutuva kīvēya.'"(Malagiya Atto.p.35)

('What have you prepared for Devendorasan?', he asked Noriko.

'I made some Susi as Devendorasan prefers Japanese food.'

'Shall I buy some beer?'

'No, we have some Sake, You prefer Sake to beer, don't you?' Noriko asked me.

'Yes, indeed, I prefer Sake, but do you get Sake in the restaurant where you work?'

'You are like a real Japanese person', her father said smiling.)

The notable feature here is the restrained tone of all the speakers. Except for a rare word like 'avan hala' which is not used in common speech all the rest represent the natural speech of urban middle classes. Let us consider the drama and symbolic implications of some of the conversations in these novels:

"'yanna epā Devendorāsan' yi ā magē muhuna desa dukbara bālmak helamin kīvāya.

magē sirura tula ginnak haṭagena hisa dakvā avilīgena ennāsē maṭa dānini. mama eyin mulumaninma dāvī giyemi.

'kohomada nogihin? man iṇḍala palak nāhā. tava koccara kal mehema tiyeyida? apaṭa hāma dāmabāne mē vidīyaṭa. kavadā hari venvenna venava. dān venvena eka vaḍā lesi nādda?' ā nāmi tama muhuna mēsaya maṭa tabā gattāya.

'yanava nam Devendorāsange sirure suvaṇḍa, mē āṇḍumvala suvaṇḍa tiyala yannayi', madavēlāvakaṭa pasu ā kīvāya."

(Malagiya Atto.p.88)

('Don't go away, Devendorasan,' she said looking into my face.

I felt that a sudden fire (pain) was born in my body and was spreading towards my head. Yes, I was burnt with that fire.

'What else can I do? There is no point in my staying. How much longer will this last? Can we go on like this forever? We will have to separate one day. Isn't it easier to separate now?'

She bent down and put her face on the table.

'If you are going away, Devendorasan, leave the scent of your body, the scent of these clothes' she said after a while.')

Noriko's words are moving. They indicate the suffering and agony in her mind when Devendora informed her of his decision to go away from Tokyo. Devendora's words are also moving. As the narrator he says that 'a fire was born in him, as he heard Noriko imploring him not to go away and leave her behind. We feel that both of them are about to break out. We feel that we see the tears gathering in their eyes, when we hear such phrases as 'kohomada nogihin inne' (How can I stay?). Also Noriko's words, 'devendorāsange sirure suvaṇḍa, mē āṇḍum-vala suvaṇḍa', ('the scent of your body, Devendorasan, the odour of your clothes') are so highly charged with poetry that they express most strikingly how much she loved him. And the style itself, unlike the previous example, is different from the natural conversational idiom of today, as it is organised to suit the sentimental but deep experience of the characters.

As some other contemporary and early Sinhalese novelists

have sometimes used a mixed style in conversation, mostly English words, rarely Tamil words, for the sake of naturalness, Saratchandra includes a large number of Japanese words in conversations in these two novels.

"kōca, kōca" yi ā hāñḍuvāya.

'Yukikochan, nenneyi, āya vaḍāgena Chieko kīvāya.

'taḍā imayi āya kīvāya.

'okayiri nasayi, Hideji hā Chiyeko kiyati."

(Malagiya Atto. p.137)

The underlined words are Japanese. They do not obstruct the reader as the author gives the meanings in footnotes. Using a mixed conversational style is a popular device of the novelists of other countries too. It creates variety in the novel and (as long as the reader is provided with meanings) is effective in other ways too. The realistic depiction of character and drama in dialogue are the most significant effects.

This discussion on the language of Saratchandra's novels was intended to emphasise his attempt at developing an individual style in Sinhalese fiction. The most interesting fact about his style is that it is also unique, like his themes. Through three novels discussed here we find him striving to widen the area of subject-matter and themes in the Sinhalese novel. Wickramasingha, Amarasekara and Jayatilaka, all contemporary novelists have created interesting works with remarkable artistic virtues. But the question is whether they have been able to heighten the standard of the Sinhalese novel to international standards. Perhaps Saratchandra knew this problem

and made these attempts to deal with cosmopolitan characters. He abandoned the popular family chronicles in his early novels and brought more modern characters into the Sinhalese novel.(1) But through his soft, lyrical, melancholic style one may not feel the true dynamic, confused and fast life of the modern world.

(1) Saratchandra's latest novel, Bandulage Paravartaya is an exception. (Published: 1971)

CHAPTER V

The Experimental Period in the Sinhalese Novel.

In the decade 1960-1970, most of the contemporary novelists were producing interesting works, though with abating ambition for exploring new trends; but this decade is significant for the emergence of a new calibre of young novelists. Their understanding of the current trends and attitudes of the modern world novel is considerable and an awareness of the life of their own modern society characterizes most of their work. Among these experimentalists, who can be called the moderns in contrast with the well established contemporaries, it is intended to discuss only the works of Siri Gunasingha, Sunanda Mahendra de Mel, R.R. Samarakoon, Hemaratna Liyanaracchi, Eva Ranavira and Tenneson Perera at length in the present chapter.

7. Siri Gunasingha.(b.1931), writes the first Stream of Consciousness novel in Sinhalese.

Siri Gunasingha's novel Hevanalla (1960)(The Shadow) deserves to be considered as the starting point of a hopeful, new era in the Sinhalese novel. It differs from the conventional Sinhalese novel with respect to its style and technique. The unique style in Hevanalla and the deep understanding of human nature and fusion of contemporary consciousness heighten this novel to the standard of one of the best Sinhalese novels ever written. To most critics of Hevanalla the main attraction

has been the depiction of 'stream of consciousness', which they have regarded as a new type of technique in the Sinhalese novel.

Before going into a detailed discussion of the theme and style in Hevanalla it will be useful to consider whether it is correct to refer to 'stream of consciousness' as a technique. In the western novel, e.g. the works of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, the stream of consciousness of the character is used as the subject matter rather than only as a technique. Robert Humphrey observes:

"The stream-of-consciousness novel is identified most quickly by its subject matter. This, rather than its techniques, its purposes, or its themes, distinguishes it. Hence, the novels that are said to use the stream-of-consciousness 'technique' to a considerable degree prove, upon analysis, to be novels which have as their essential subject matter the consciousness of one or more characters; that is, the depicted consciousness serves as a screen on which the material in these novels is presented." (1)

To present the stream of consciousness of characters the novelist has to use some techniques, which are common to most types of the novel, such as dialogue, location, description, sudden shift of scenes and persons, logical and gradual development of plot etc. But the 'consciousness' as it has been analysed by psychologists indicates the entire area of mental attention, with all deep levels and layers of the mind up to

(1) Humphrey, Robert. Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel. University of California Press. 1968.p.2.

the communicable awareness; and this shows that what we can expect a normal novelist to depict in his work is only the upper and clearer states of consciousness. In the older psychological novel the mental awareness of the character is rationalized and organized, whereas in the stream-of-consciousness novel the natural levels of the mind to the deepest possible point are revealed.

In the Sinhalese novel it is in Hevanalla that an attempt has been made to present the stream-of-consciousness on a large scale, though there are some other novels in which occasional use of stream of consciousness is found. When the consciousness of a particular character is used only occasionally, then it serves as a 'technique' along with other common ones. What makes the reader of a stream of consciousness novel think of it as a new 'technique' is probably the difference of the language. As the stream of consciousness novel is extremely naturalistic, its language becomes natural as a result. In the style of Hevanalla and in some other experimental Sinhalese novels, a considerable newness and frankness can be seen, as opposed to the styles of earlier contemporary novels. According to the needs of the new novel, especially when the novelist is concerned about the consciousness of his characters, the language takes a suitable form as Leonard Lutwick has observed:

"It is speech without the use of syntax, or speech in which conventional syntax is replaced by a personal rhetoric of associations employed just below the level of communication. The style of such passages must be

an appropriate imitation of potential or incipient speech, just as speaking style in conventional fiction imitates actual or achieved speech. When the contents of a character's consciousness is composed of sensations, however, the style cannot be modelled upon the non-imitative imagination of the novelist working with the syntax and vocabulary of poetry. In either event, opportunities for mixed style novels have been immeasurably increased by the stream of consciousness technique; for in a single novel there may be as many styles as there are characters, and single character may have more than one style assigned to him, depending upon the level of consciousness in which he is revealed."(1)

In our analysis of the style in Hevanalla, we will see how Siri Gunasingha too has sometimes used 'speech without the use of syntax', as Lutwick refers to it. The lack of syntax in this case should be considered only as a general disregarding of the grammar of the written language, but not of the natural flow and sequence of the thoughts and feelings of the characters.

In Hevanalla the story is related in the third person. The novel is centred upon the theme of the mental struggle of a village youth to adapt himself to the modern cultural situation at the university by breaking away from his traditional morals. When we look at it like this it seems not very different from the themes of most other contemporary novels. One of the reasons for this is that some of the novels we have

(1) James L. Calderwood and Harold E. Toliver. Perspectives on Fiction. Oxford University Press. New York. Leonard Lutwick's article.p.36

discussed in the previous chapter were written after the appearance of this novel; for example Depanoladdo (1961) by Amarasekara and most of the novels by Jayatilaka. Some may point to the fact that the main character in Hevanalla is somewhat similar to Aravinda in Wickramasingha's Virāgaya. The only significant similarity in these two characters that we can trace is the conspicuous defeat of them both in the end. Unlike in Viragaya and other major Sinhalese novels of the recent past, we do not find an attempt at portraying a number of characters in detail in Hevanalla. Though there are some important characters in it, other than the main character, they are not depicted at any considerable length. For instance, the mother in Hevanalla; we feel her presence from the beginning of the story right upto the end, but only as a force, not as a person. So is the character of Loku Hamuduruvo, the high priest. Even the character of Kanti, who is one of the most dynamic forces that shocks Jinadasa, is not depicted in such a way as to leave a clear picture of her in the reader's mind.

The plot in this novel is simple if we make a summary of it. Jinadasa, the only son of a village middleclass family, who is brought up under strict control of Buddhist morals by his mother and the village priest, enters the university. First he laughs at the 'sillyness', 'meanness' and 'corruption' of others who follow western manners. His friend, Wijepala, helps him understand that the common life at the University and in the town is not harmful or sinful. Jinadasa tries to adapt. He

questions the meaningfulness of old values and becomes unable to bear the confusion in his mind this sudden change caused. Then he forgets his mother for some time but goes back to her again to regain peace of mind. She turns him out. Then he comes back to Colombo and attempts to forget his sufferings by drinking and visiting prostitutes. All his attempts turn out to be fruitless as the force of his mother haunts him. She follows him (in his now abnormal imagination) as a shadow. Most critics of this novel, while emphasising its being the first stream of consciousness novel in Sinhalese, have analysed it on a moral and cultural basis. As Saratchandra observes:

"Jinadasa faces a rather difficult conflict about values of life. His mother and the chief priest are the symbols of conventional values. He feels that it is because of the spiritual influence exerted by them upon his life that he is unable to conform to the new life. But he does not understand the meaning of the new life either. It is the bottle of arrack and the prostitute that he sees as its quintessence. However the shadow of his past falls upon him and mars his progress.....Perhaps the author is saying that Jinadasa should break with his past violently. To drag Jinadasa out of his naivety he should be subjected to a sudden shock. Even the bottle of arrack and the prostitute can be used for this purpose.' But readers may wonder whether those things that the author indicates Jinadasa had to discard were really futile or not. Is it really necessary for him to forget his past in order to conform to the new life? Is not his genuine discipline more important than the impudence of his friends? It could be because of doubts like these that the reader finds it difficult to sympathise with

the author's view. It may be for this same reason that the reader of this novel may not be deeply moved."(1)

At a closer glance at Hevanalla we may find that it is difficult to agree completely with these ideas of Saratchandra. First of all we can see that Siri Gunasingha's purpose has not been approving one type of life by rejecting another. He simply shows how a youth like Jinadasa faced a great catastrophe in his attempts to enter a new way of life. He is forced to do so by circumstances in the atmosphere. The author does not recommend the bottle of arrack and the prostitute as the sole way of entering new life. Jinadasa is not a symbol of a particular class but he is representative of a whole culture. The author's intention, nevertheless, has not been to deal with a cultural conflict, as some other Sinhalese novelists, in an historical perspective. The cultural elements dominate the external layers of the novel like a great force. What the author really intends to present is the individual experiences of the character through his consciousness. Jinadasa does not suffer from a lack of will to adjust himself to new conditions. It is the unexpected shock which resulted from the adjustment that upset Jinadasa. Also the sorrow of losing his past is another reason for his suffering.

As Hevanalla involves the problems of a person whose life is strongly inspired by the personality of his mother it may

(1) Saratchandra, Edirivira. Sinhala Navakata Itihasaya ha vicaraya. p.135.

be worthwhile to consider whether there is any influence of D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* on it. This work, which can be considered as one of the best English novels, is mostly autobiographical; it includes genuine and interesting pictures of the life of miners in Nottingham, and relates the story of Walter Morel and his family who are compared by the critics to Lawrence's real family. As the story develops, the main character, Paul Morel, is seen drifting in between his ardent love for his mother and his passionate love affairs with Miriam and Clara. In *Sons and Lovers* most of the important characters are well developed and natural. Paul loves his mother, perhaps more strongly than she loved him, and tries to be faithful to her until the end. His character runs deep with various complications of his sensitivity as an artist, strange aspects of the love Miriam offered him and his surprisingly tenacious willpower.

When we think of Jinadasa in *Hevanalla* in contrast with Paul in *Sons and Lovers* we can see a slight similarity. There is, of course, some evidence in *Hevanalla* which indicates that the author has been an admirer of *Sons and Lovers*. The basic idea of both these novelists is creating a character strictly governed by his mother. As we read *Hevanalla* we find various references to *Sons and Lovers* in it. This shows, presumably, that the author has been thinking of *Sons and Lovers* while he was writing *Hevanalla*.(1) There is a considerable difference

(1) See Gunasingha, Siri. *Hevanalla*. 3rd.edition.Colombo.1967 pp.91,92,93.

between Jinadasa's love of his mother and Paul's love of his mother. Jinadasa's mother tried to bring him up as an ideal Buddhist and to educate him so that he might become a high ranking government official. Paul's mother does not care about the purity of his character, she would not mind if he smokes, drinks or goes with girls. Her only concern is that he must stay with her like a lover as she had lost the pleasure she expected from her husband and her first son. Mrs. Morel is an educated woman with an acute sensitivity. But she was jealous when she saw that Paul was going to be taken away from her by Miriam. The character of Jinadasa's mother in Hevanalla does not stand out in clear light like this. She is obscure and stands only for a vague driving force. Although Jinadasa suffers from his disobedient behaviour we feel that he could gain control over his mind if he were not badly hurt by the separation from Kanti. His early religious education too has been presented as another hurdle in his life, whereas in Paul's life there is no frustration from love and no dynamic religious power. Hevanalla embodies the experiences of the author in the descriptions of the university life in Colombo in the same sincere manner as the experiences of Lawrence in Nottingham mining society.

The following few passages from Hevanalla and Sons and Lovers are somewhat comparable:

"He thought that he was the only pride of his mother.

His mother is the only friend for him also, even if he

loses all others. But Jinadasa concealed everything from his mother. Is that because of shyness or fear? Is it because of his unwillingness to make his mother annoyed? He himself does not know'.

'It is difficult to hide these things. Trying to hide them makes things worse. I must tell everything to my mother. My mother will be a little annoyed. But if I can tell her everything it will be a great relief to my mind.' (Hevanalla.p.167)

Paul also finds his mother as the last and only reliable refuge:

"He had come back to his mother. Hers was the strongest tie in his life. When he thought round, Miriam shrank away. There was a vague, unreal feel about her. And nobody else mattered. There was one place in the world that stood solid and did not melt into unreality: the place where his mother was. Everybody else could grow shadowy, almost non-existent to him, but she could not. It was as if the pivot and pole of his life, from which he could not escape, was his mother." (1)

Towards the end of both the novels, both Paul and Jinadasa find themselves in a 'derelict' state. ('Derelict' is the title of Lawrence's last chapter):

"Although Jinadasa went out to the road he could not make up his mind where to go. Where should I go? It doesn't matter where ever it is. Is there any difference, whether it be to the right or left? It will be the same whether it is forward or backward." (Hevanalla.p.195.)

Towards the end of Sons and Lovers we find Paul also in

(1) Lawrence, D.H. Sons and Lovers. Collins. London 1969.p.226

a similar state:

"The real agony was that he had nowhere to go, nothing to do, nothing to say, and was nothing himself. Sometimes he ran down the streets as if he were mad: sometimes he was mad; things weren't there, things were there"
(Sons and Lovers.p.403)

One of the main differences between Hevanalla and Sons and Lovers is the technique of presenting the psychological crisis of the characters. In the former the stream of consciousness is often revealed to us directly while in the latter it is described to us from the third person point of view.

In the style in Hevanalla the dialogue plays a vital role though it has not been used very frequently. The following dialogue takes place between Jinadasa and his best friend at the university, Wijepala:

"Ättada, Kānti enavada?"
'tamuse gāna Kānti ṭikak āsāvelā vageyi'
'ē mokō, mokō, Kānti kīve?'
'nā, kiyapu deyak nā, tamuse enavakō, tamuseṭa etakoṭa tereyi, rupiyal pahak denava'
'hat ilavvayi, dān nāhā, kavadada trip eka?'
'Senasurādā, udē hataṭa enava 'Kolej havus' eka laṅgaṭa,"
(Hevanalla.p.110)
('Really, is Kanti coming?'
'It seems that Kanti fancies you a bit'
'How's that? What did Kanti say?'
'Nothing particularly,.You just come along. Then you'll realize. Give me five rupees.'
'Damn it, I haven't got it now. When is the trip?'
'Saturday, At seven in the morning. Wait at the college House.')

The drama lies in the shortness and sharpness in the

phrases. Wijepala knows very well how Jinadasa's mind works and therefore he draws the attention towards Kanti, the girl for whom Jinadasa pined. Being Jinadasa's best friend Wijepala frankly attempts to give him a chance to meet the girl at leisure. The trip he was organizing is the best for this purpose. As soon as he hears the girl's name, Jinadasa asks 'Really, is Kanti coming?'. Wijepala talks again and again about Kanti as the excitement in Jinadasa increases. This growing interest in Jinadasa is ironical as involvement with a girl, according to his earlier attitude, was the worst that could happen to a man. Without his knowing it, Jinadasa begins to appreciate everything which he used to criticise and condemn some time ago:

"Wije, I see Jinadasa is now very fond of reading dirty books,' said Jayasekara who was sitting at the next table, coming up to the table where Jinadasa was sitting. Why doesn't Jayasekara mind his own business without coming to meddle with ours. The bugger. Why does he bother himself. 'How do you know these are dirty books?' said Jinadasa frowning at Jayasekara.

'Do you think that I haven't read those books? That's how I know. You guys think that it is only you who read this type of books. But we don't go mad like you'.

Neither Wijepala nor Jinadasa could imagine why Jayasekara was so angry. However it affected Jinadasa, it made Wijepala laugh.

'But you must have read it with a dirty mind', said Jinadasa and looked at Jayasekara as if to burn him. Wijepala sees very well the blazing rage in Jinadasa's mind.

'With whatever mind you read it, dirt is dirt. You must have perhaps read it with a 'Bodhisatta' mind. Why man

things about nude prostitutes, what people do and say to them, are these not dirty?'

'So what's wrong in writing about them? Aren't these things what you call life? No matter if you do them, but bad to talk about them I suppose. Why do 'Upasakas' (pious devotees) like you regard sexual intercourse as such a secret thing? It is not only a secret to you, but you think of it as an impure thing. Something barbarous, as something even lower than going to the lavatory.'"

(Hevanalla. p.102)

Through this incident the sudden change, the drastic change in Jinadasa's mind is well depicted. Here he strives to defend the very same things which he previously considered as dirty, mean and harmful. When Jinadasa first came to the university, it was of him that the word 'upasaka' was used by his friends. Now he has gone far away from that stage and he calls others 'upasaka'. Although Jinadasa criticises the hypocrites in society, the reader knows that it is only Jinadasa's new friend, Jayaratna, who speaks like this through him. Because it was this person who really exerted a dynamic influence upon Jinadasa as a result of which he began to question the value of the things he had been admiring and hallowing in his village.

The narrative in Hevanalla is generally compendious. It is full of original figures of language and to emphasise a certain idea repetition is sometimes used:

"kesēhō kasāda bāṇḍa avurudu hayakaṭa pasu āyaṭa Jinadāsa lābuni. set kavi, tovil pavil, puḍa pūja nisā viya hāka. Jinadāsa deviyangēma varayaki. etek kal ā nomārī siṭiyē

Jinadāsa āṭa labenna tibunu nisayi. āgē hitaṭa ālokeyak
 dānunē Jinadāsa upannāṭa pasuya. āgē āṅgaṭa panak āvē
 Jinadāsa upannāṭapasuya. Jinadāsa āgē ekama sampatayi.
 āṭa dān āgē hitakaṭa purā āttē Jinadāsa pamanayi. Jina-
 dāsa paressam karagannavāṭa vaḍā vādagat vāḍak āṭa tavat
 notibini.....āgē sāpata Jinadāsage sāpatayi.
 Jinadāsaṭa ibāgāte yanna hāriyot ohut tāttā vagēma vināsa
 venavaṭa sākayak nāta. mohotakaṭa hō āhaṭa nopenī inna
 diya yutu nāta. gedara nātnam iskōle. iskōle nātnam. loku
 iskōle mahattayālayi gedara. loku iskōle mahattayālayi
 gedara nātnam pansalē. Jinadāsaṭa vena kotanakaṭavat
 yā nohāka."(Hevanalla.p.15)

(It was after six years of marriage that she had had
 Jinadasa. It may have been due to all kinds of magic or
 religious deeds. Jinadasa was a gift from the gods. It
 was because she had to have Jinadasa that she survived
 so long without dying. Jinadasa is the light of her
 heart. Life was rekindled in her body after Jinadasa was
 born. Her only treasure is Jinadasa. Now Jinadasa fills
 all her body and soul. There was no other task for her,
 more important than looking after Jinadasa.....Her
 pleasure is Jinadasa's pleasure. If he is allowed to idle
 there is no doubt that he too will ruin himself like his
 father. He must not be allowed to be away from her eye
 even for a moment. If he is not at home he must be in
 school. If he is not in the school he must be at the
 Headmaster's. If not at the Headmaster's he must be at
 the temple. Jinadasa cannot go to any other place.)

Siri Gunasingha prefers simple, short sentences to long
 ones with stereotyped rhetoric. We must not, nevertheless,
 forget the fact that Gunasingha is a poet. Consider the rhythm
 in the endings of the sentences in the passage above, 'labuni',
 varayaki, nisayi, pamanayi'. They are melodic. Also the

repetition of the meaning is notable; the reason for Jinadasa's mother to care so much for him. Most of the sentences include the name 'Jinadasa'. And the alliterative phrases 'ägē hitaṭa ālokayak dānunē', and 'ägē āngaṭa panak āvē', illustrate the mother's affection as well as her happiness. The last few phrases indicate how she strove to confine Jinadasa to a small atmosphere, home, school and temple.

Gunasingha's style is characterized by beautiful and powerful imagery. This has become successful due to the fact that the character he created, Jinadasa is also an artist like himself. For example:

"Although Layisa was not a pretty woman, Jinadasa was attracted to her by something strange about her movements. Like a Naga woman in her gait.(gamanin sadisi naliya.) Jinadasa likes her very much due to her piercing (vinvidayana) eyes."(Hevanalla.p.95)

At this moment when Jinadasa thinks of Layisa, he had been excited by thinking about sexual adventures of one of his friends and by thinking that he too should change and have some experience. So his thoughts about the girl are naturally passionate. But at a later stage we find him looking at the same girl from an artistic point of view:

"Jinadāsa gedara ā ā vārayehi ohu duṭuvē Lāyisā pasugiya vārayaṭa vaḍā amutu vī tibena bavaya. ägē vāḍīma ohu viparam kalē aṇḍina situvamak rekhāven rekhāva, varnālepayen varnālepaya vāḍena sāṭi viparam karana sittarek lesini. ägē ladaru ās deka hiṭi hāṭiye tiyunu ālokayak labā tibunu hāṭi ek nivāḍuvakadī ohuṭa penina. anik nivāḍuve ägē manda sinahavē sinidu gatiya ohuṭa vāṭahina. īlaṅga

nivāḍuvedī ohugē dāsa yomu vūye āṅgili tuḍin gata hākiva
 tibunu siṅgiti tanapuḍu doḍam gāṭa dekak men dāḍiva nerā
 tibunu hāṭiyaṭayi. āge iṅgaṭiya sihin karamin ukula
 depasaṭa mahativiya. mē hāma venas vīmakma eka avurudu
 dekakadī nātnam tunakadī siḍuvuna hāṭi Jinadāsaṭa puḍu-
 mayaki." (Hevanalla. p.177)

(Each time Jinadasa went home he found that Layisa had changed from the last time he saw her. He observed her growing up like an artist scrutinizing a painting taking shape with every new line and every new stroke of the brush. In one vacation he witnessed how her childlike eyes had acquired a sudden brightness. During the next vacation he experienced the tenderness in her smile. In the vacation after that his eyes were captured by her breasts, now like two oranges though formerly so tiny that one could hold one by one's finger tips. Her hips broadened making her waist slimmer. To think that all these changes had occurred during a period of two or three years was a surprise to Jinadasa.)

While presenting the growth of Layisa, Gunasingha tries to create an impression in the reader's mind similar to that that Jinadasa had in his secret appreciation of the girl's beauty. Although Layisa's growing up is described without using any conventional tropes, in every reference to her figure there is a pleasant erotic implication, corresponding to the current mental state of Jinadasa. While observing the transformation of the girl's body he feels it. Some new terms such as 'sināve sinindu gatiya', 'ladaru ās deka', and 'siṅgititana puḍu', add to the poetry in Gunasingha's style.

As we have seen, the most significant feature in Hevanalla is the presentation of the stream of consciousness. The style

becomes extremely natural in the passages in which the character's consciousness is exposed with a few narrative sentences:

"Virasekara gāna kalpanā karamin yana Jinadāsā^{ta} hadisiyen men skūllēn muvadora gālu pārē ehāṭa mehāṭa yana ratha vāhana penenṭa viya. ēvā oḥṭa penune godurakaṭa ivavāṭi kaḍimuḍiye pāna pāna diva yana satun rālak meni. parak-kuda danne nāhā. Vijeya bāna bāna āti. avva vāṭi dilisena dūvillen tamāgē alut āṇḍum kiluṭu vēḍāyi Jinadasaṭa hitu-ni. bambuva. kamak nāha. Jinadāsage hita yomuvī tibenne havasaṭa tibena priyasambhāṣanayaṭayi. ehi gos kala yuttē kumakḍāyi hitenṭa viya. monava hari vihilu dēval kiyanna. ōna. hinaha venna ōna. anē maṭa bāhā. maṭa puluvanda vihilu kiyanna. mama vihilu danne nāhā. mokada bāri. ṭikak kunuhabba vagē ēva tamayi kiyanna ōna. Vijeya laṅgin vāḍivunāma okkoma hari. ū dannavā ōna padan kunuhabba vihilu. habāṭama mehema pāṭi ekakaṭa giyahama mokada karanne. monavada karanne. kanava. bonava. hinaha venava. sellam, mama danna sellamak nāha. maṭa bāha ōva. Kāntit ēvida danne nāha. edā sōṣal ekaṭa giya eka koccara hoṇ-dada. nogiya nam kavādāvat Kānti yālu karaṇanna hambu venavāyi. Kānti ekka mama kohomada edā katā karanna paṭan gatte. Vijē tamayi ēkaṭat maṅga pādala dunne. Vijē hoṇḍa ekā. kohoma hari māva ādan gihilla Kānti laṅgin vāḍi kerevvane. hoṇḍa eka." (Hevanalla.p.63.)

(Suddenly Jinadasa saw the traffic on the Galle Road at the end of the School Lane as he was walking thinking of Virasekara. The vehicles seemed to him as a pack of beasts chasing fast after a prey they have smelled. I might be late. Vije must be cursing me now. Jinadasa worried if his new clothes would get dirty with the dust which glittered in the sun. Rubbish. Not to worry. Jinadasa is absorbed in thoughts of the party in the

evening. He wondered what he could do at the party. I must make some jokes. Must laugh. Oh, no, I can't. Can I crack jokes? I don't know any jokes. But come. Anything dirty would do. Best thing would be to sit near Vije. He knows enough dirty jokes. What should one really do at a party like this? What else other than eating, drinking, and dancing. But I don't know any dancing. I can't do those things. I wonder if Kanti will come too. What a good thing I went to the 'social' the other day. If I hadn't gone I would never have been able to meet Kanti. How did I start chatting with Kanti. Vije helped me in that too. Vije is a good bloke. Anyhow he made me sit beside Kanti. Good bloke.)

At this juncture in Jinadasa's life, he has just begun to come out of his cocoon. The naive, shy and simple village boy is now beginning to mix with the westernized society. The change that was taking place in his mind is reflected in this piece of interior monologue. Jinadasa bothers himself about the cleanliness of his clothes, and he is worried about being a little late. Consider the image of the traffic at the beginning of the passage. Jinadasa thinks of the traffic as a herd of animals chasing after a prey. It resembles the state of his own mind. He is chasing after a 'prey', which might be either pleasure and enjoyment at the party or the girl he was interested in. His mind gradually fills with various ideas about the party, mostly revealing his inexperience and natural excitement. Words such as 'bambuva' and 'kamak naha' show how Jinadasa tries to encourage himself. Single words, incomplete phrases, etc., are characteristic of this style which tends to be most

natural and realistic. It shows the confused, illogical, and unexpected nature of the stream of consciousness.

In the above passage Jinadasa's feelings reveal not only his consciousness at that particular moment but also his social background. When he thinks, 'Oh no, I can't, can I make jokes?' and 'really, what is one supposed to do at these parties?', the reality in his mind is exposed to us and we can sympathize with his nervousness and hesitation since we feel it is natural.

The effectiveness of the above passage is created by the meticulous choice of words. For example, consider the phrases 'vihilu karanavā' (to joke) and 'sellam karanavā' (to dance), which are not normally used by the average university student. We can hear them saying 'jōk gahanavā' and 'dāns karanavā' instead. If Jinadasa had adjusted himself to university life right from the beginning he would have used these common words. But at this stage as he was only beginning to change he thinks of making jokes and dancing in rather naive terms revealing his village background. Jinadasa thinks, at times, in new mixed terms such as 'pāṭi eka' (a party) and 'soṣial eka' (a social evening) because these concepts themselves are new to him and probably he had not heard of them at home. One side of Jinadasa's mind pushes him into these parties while the other side drags him back. We realize this struggle in his mind when we hear him thinking 'anē maṭa bāhā' (Oh no I can't) 'maṭa bāha ōva' (I can't do those things) and 'edā sōṣial ekaṭa giya eka koc-cara honḍada', (what a good thing I went to the social the other

day.) These thoughts show that Jinadasa was ashamed of himself on the one hand, for letting himself be tempted like this; and on the other hand he is aware of the advantages of mixing with his friends at parties as he knew that it was the only way to meet Kanti:

"'Jine', Jinadāsaṭa ē velāvē tamāma haṇḍunā gata nohāki viya. Kānti ē katā kalē tamā samagada. Kānti ē kīvvē tamāgē namada. 'Jine'. ehema namak iṭa pera asā tibunu bavak Jinadāsaṭa sitā gata nohāki viya. 'Jine' koccara lassanada. Kāntige kaṭin kiyavena koṭa tavat lassanayi. ridī sīnu haṇḍavā. Kāntige tol lassana handa Jinē kiyala kiyana koṭa tavat lassanayi. lassana gāniyak vitara lassana deyak tavat mē lōkema nāha. Kānti koccara lassanada. tava eka poḍittak hīn unā nam."(Hevanalla.p.65)

('Jine', Jinadasa could not recognize himself at that moment. Was it really with him that Kanti was talking? Was it his name that Kanti called? 'Jine', Jinadasa could not imagine that he had heard such a name before. 'Jine', Oh, how sweet! It's even sweeter when it comes from Kanti's mouth. Ringing silver bells. When Kanti says 'Jine', it sounds so sweet because her lips are beautiful. There is nothing in this world as beautiful as a beautiful woman. How beautiful Kanti is. But if only she were a little bit thinner.)

This appreciation of a woman by Jinadasa is completely different from how he appreciated the beauty of Layisa. (see page 386.) In that instance he admired Layisa attaining maturity from the point of view of an artist. He was not in love with her. At this moment his attitude is different when he thinks of Kanti, because he fancied her and wanted to fall in love with her. To suit the mood of Jinadasa, the style in the above

passage has become sentimental. Through the reflections in Jinadasa's consciousness we understand that Kanti is a pretty girl, though no conventional type of description has been made. When he sees the first glimpse of love in his life, Jinadasa becomes over excited. So he begins to imagine things. The moment he hears his name being called by Kanti he is carried away by emotions. He thinks again and again how she called him 'Jine'. Consider the effect of the independent phrase 'ridi sinu handava' (ringing silver bells'), which is drawn from the folk idiom. When ordinary people refer to a sweet voice of somebody they can be heard saying 'hariyata ridi sinuvak gahanava vage' (Just like ringing a silver bell). Jinadasa is a villager. So he remembers his natural idiom. Kanti's voice and her lips are very beautiful for Jinadasa and he feels she is almost perfect. And yet in his coy imagination he fancies that 'tava eka podittak....'(if only she were a litte thinner.)

The following example will show how intensely and powerfully the character can be analysed by presenting the stream of consciousness:

"mē gānige jīvitē hoṇḍa hoṇḍa dēval tiyenna āti. vistara ahagattot. hoṇḍa potak liyanna puluvan. potak. navakatāvak. prasiddha venna nam pot liyana eka taram hoṇḍa vāḍak nāhā. sivil pāskalāṭa āti deyak nāhā. ējanta hāmu-duruvo. minissu kāmāti sāhityayaṭa tamayi, nila tala valaṭa noveyi. olu geḍiya. sāhityaya. bambuva. duppat minissunṭa mona sāhityayada. ē minissu jīvat venna bāruva daṅgalanava. anit minissu ē minissu. gāna pot liyanava.

liyala hambu karanava. usas venava. pohosoat minissu
duppat minissunge duppat kamen pohosat venava. pohosat
minissu duppat minissu pohosat duppat. hoñda. naraka.
asarana. sarana. saranankara." (Hevanalla.pp.75/76)

(There must've been plenty of interesting things in this woman's life. If only I could ask her about them. Then I could write a good book. a book. a novel. There's nothing better than writing a book to become famous. What good is there in passing into the civil service? Honourable Agent. What people really like is literature, but not titles. my foot. literature. rubbish. What good is there in literature for poor people? They fight for their life. And others write books about them. To make profit. Then they prosper. The rich thrive on the poverty of the poor. The rich. The poor. The rich and the poor. The good, the bad. 'Asarana, sarana, Saranankara.')

The rising up of ideas in waves and the resulting commotion in the mind of the character is depicted here. And the train of ideas turn into a complex maze. Under the explicit intricacy a submerged logical connection too can be traced. As Jinadasa walks down a street in a hurry he happens to pass a beggar woman. First his mind melts with pity. Soon he begins to think about the past of that woman, but only for a moment. All other ideas in this passage spring from the initial pity he felt for the beggar woman and they are connected with his current mental state. At that time he had just begun to associate with intellectuals like Jayaratna and was cultivating an interest in art and literature. He gets irritated when the hidden futility of the writer's 'business' occurs to him. The single words such as 'olugediya'(my foot) 'bambuva (literal

translation: a pipe, but here rubbish) indicate the unsettled and uncertain state of his ideas. The word 'bambuva' is used in the same way in some other places in Hevanalla. It becomes a favourite word in Jinadasa's interior monologue. When various ideas concerning the poor and the rich appear in his mind, Jinadasa hits upon the word 'asarana'(helpless) and naturally the word 'sarana'(help) follows it. When these two words 'asarana and sarana' are put together any Sinhalese speaker would remember the famous name 'Asarana Sarana Saranankara'. This would explain how the last phrase in the above passage has come up.

Almost every page in Hevanalla abounds in alluring poetic expressions, new similes or powerful imagery. Here are a few examples:

"Kānti tamāṭa hābaṭama ādarēda nādda yanna sāka sahitaya. sākaya bin ūrek men hita ātula ṭika ṭika hārayi. bin ūrā iṇda hiṭa matu piṭaṭada eyi. Jinadāsaṭa baya hitenne eviṭaya." (Hevanalla. p.127)

(Jinadasa is doubtful whether Kanti loves him truly or not. Suspicion digs slowly into his mind like a 'bin ura' (a mole cricket). The 'bin ura' comes up to the surface from time to time. Then Jinadasa becomes frightened.)

"pena vidahāgena tūmbasin ena nayinṭa men Jinadāsa tamāge adahas valaṭa biya viya." (Hevanalla.p.132)

(Jinadasa was scared of his own ideas as of cobras appearing from ant-hills with open hoods.)

"visvavidyālayaṭa ātuluvū palamu avurudde nam Jinadāsa hāsurunē mōḍa gama rāla keneku meni. gāḍavilaku men mullaka gulivi siṭīma ohugē sirita viya. ehet Jinadāsa

hiṭi hāṭiyē eliyaṭa āveya. bittara kaṭuven eliyaṭa ena kukulu pāṭavaku men Jinadāsa sināsemin kici bici gāmin eliyaṭa āvēya. ira eliyaṭa ohugē ās purudu viya. ohu eka varama gī kiyana kurullek viya. ohuṭa sellam kirīmaṭa tavat pāna pāna duvana kukul pāṭav hāma tānama dakinṭa lābina." (Hevanalla. p.135)

(In his first year in the university Jinadasa lived like a foolish peasant. He used to stay crouched in a corner like an earthworm. But Jinadasa came out suddenly. Like a chicken emerging out of the egg-shell, smiling and chirping he came out. His eyes got used to the sunlight. He transformed into a singing bird at once. So many other chickens who were gaily running about were to be seen whom he could play with.)

"tun masak tissē nokiv ādaraye barin hadavata pelāgena siṭiyē aniyam daruvaku kusin darana gāhāniyak meni." (Hevanalla. p.137)

(His heart was oppressed by the weight of his undeclared love, and had been for three months, like a woman bearing an illegitimate child in her womb.)

"Jinadāsaṭa ivasiya nohākke hita ekamutu karagata nohāki vīmayi. kapuṭu rālakataasuvū maskāballak men tamāge ātma-ya kābali kabalīvalaṭa irī yannāk men Jinadāsaṭa dāneyi." (Hevanalla. p.151)

(However much he tried, it was impossible for Jinadasa to concentrate. It was this confusion in his mind which Jinadasa really hated. Jinadasa's soul was torn away bit by bit like a piece of flesh grabbed by a flock of crows.)

"gas gal peralāgena, gorahāḍi haṇḍa nanvamin galana maha gan vaturak men dahasak situvili ohu pasu pasin enna paṭan gattēya." (Hevanalla. p.206)

(Thousands of ideas began to chase after him, like a great flood which devastates trees and rocks in its flow with a fearful noise.)

When we consider these examples we find that Gunasingha quite often uses animals as images. This may not be a conscious choice. But in the examples given above we find him using 'a mole cricket' 'cobras'; 'chickens', 'a flock of crows' etc. The imagery thus created is, however, pleasant and powerful. Especially the images of the mole cricket and that of the piece of flesh grabbed by crows present the mental turmoil of Jinadasa vividly and strikingly. The second characteristic of these images is their originality. Gunasingha borrows from others very rarely, and when he does it is not to the extent of harming the beauty of his original ideas.

As we have seen in our earlier discussions, the Sinhalese novelists have been very aware of the importance of the style. In his only work of fiction Siri Gunasingha has heightened the language of fiction in poetic and sensitive qualities more than most other writers. Gunasingha's style can be regarded as the most significant one in the 'new wave' on the same level as Saratchandra's style which is unique among the 'contemporaries.' (1) Both Saratchandra and Gunasingha enrich their styles with fresh imagery and poetry. The former's style is usually inspired by classical prose whereas the latter's is inspired by the current written and spoken idiom.

(1) The novelists discussed in Chapter IV.

Sunanda Mahendra De Mel (b.1938), deals with the modern urban life.

Hevanali Ada Minissu (Men with crooked shadows)(1964) gained immediate fame for Sunanda Mahendra as a promising, experimental modern novelist. He shows a deep understanding of the art of fiction and contemporary society in his maiden novel, creating a fresh and hopeful trend for ambitious young novelists. The new novelists like Sunanda Mahendra sought influence from the same kind of world novelists as the earlier major Sinhalese novelists, but they have at the same time been more interested in such novelists as James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner, J.D. Salinger etc. More than the major contemporary novelists, these young experimentalists are conscious of the current trends in world literature and were determined to save the Sinhalese novel from stagnancy. While attempting to give a new look to the form of the Sinhalese novel, these new novelists have been incessantly aware of the development of the language as their prime medium.

After the success of Hevanali Ada Minissu, Sunanda Mahendra has published three other novels, viz, Guruvarayakuge Katava (1965)(The story of a teacher), Eya Mese Siduviya (1967)(Thus has it happened) and Valmiki Obata Kive Sita (1968)(Valmiki called you 'Sita'.). These works were not all received with the same warm welcome by the readers as the first novel of the author. He deals with a limited number of characters and his stories are consequently short. This structure becomes

naturally simple and externally less complicated.

In Hevanali Ada Minissu we meet a new social group for the first time in the Sinhalese novel, though we still feel that these people are Sinhalese and that they belong to the period in which we live. The novelty in the theme is caused by the lack of conflicts between village and town values which was, as we have seen, a pet theme of most of the earlier contemporary Sinhalese novelists. The two families in this novel are westernized middle class people though they still have not completely severed links with the indigenous culture. For instance, Mr. Siriwardana who is presented as a modern scholar, becomes more and more interested in local myths, rituals, black magic, astrology etc., while Victor, the hero is forced to wear a charm by his adults to pass his exam. Victor's parents and Srimala's parents are shown at first as interested in western style parties and dancing but later they become devoted to religion. The motive of the novelist is to depict the life of the young generation of this floating society in Colombo. Victor, Justin, Piyawati and Srimala represent the young generation from several different aspects. Justin, the elder brother, is a scientist who is not emotional and not sensitive as opposed to Victor who is an arts graduate. In contrast with these two male characters, Piyawati and Srimala enter the scene from two different social backgrounds, the former from a village but with modern education and fine sensitivity and the latter from the city, without high education but with a taste for western

music and dancing etc. Justin marries Piyawati and Victor marries Srma, the wrong partner in both cases, with the result that the marriages are unsuccessful.

Everybody at home pays special attention and respect to Justin though he drifts away from his family and spends his time mostly with his friends in night clubs. Victor feels from the beginning that Srma could not share his tastes and that it was impossible to elevate her taste to a higher level; and yet he gets married to her disregarding his parents' objection. He admires Piyawati from the beginning because she is capable of appreciating good literature and other art forms. Victor suffers not only from his personal problems but also from Piyawati's problems. He realizes how unhappy her marriage was with Justin but does not see any way of helping since no one in the family dared to advise Justin. The friendship between Piyawati and Victor is misunderstood by Srma who fails to conform with the atmosphere at Victor's home. Justin dies suddenly and Piyawati goes back to her parents after some time. Srma too threatens to leave Victor because she continues to think that Victor was really in love with Piyawati. The story ends with a quarrel between Victor and Srma making us understand that it is the end of their marriage.

Of interest in this novel as regards the form is the presentation of the stream of consciousness of the main character which shows the influence of Hevanalla to a considerable extent. In some places the presentation of Victor's stream of

consciousness is so highly charged with drama that we feel Sunanda Mahendra has advanced the technique introduced by Siri Gunasingha to the Sinhalese novel, to an admirable level. The general narrative seems to be influenced by the novels of Lawrence and Joyce. Like these two western novelists Sunanda Mahendra too likes changing the form of the novel and he also is fond of some common techniques such as poetic description and use of symbols. (We discuss these features in detail in the analysis of the language of this novel, later in this chapter.)

Guruvarayakuge Katava, the second novel by Sunanda Mahendra, is centred upon the life of a young teacher whose character is more or less similar to that of Victor in Hevanali Ada Minissu. Sunanda Mahendra seems to be fond of dealing with the life of teachers in Colombo since the main character in 'Eya mese siduviya' too is a teacher. However, he analyses or looks at the problems of the teachers not from a professional angle but from more complicated points of view as regards the emotional life. It is not only the main characters but also such roles as the father, mother and the mother-in-law in these novels who share similar characteristics.

Virasingha in Guruvaryakuge Katava has just come out from the university with a degree when he faces severe objections from his father about his relationship with Ramya. Like Victor in Hevanali Ada Minissu, Virasingha also fails to understand his girl friend very well despite his love of her. Ramya

remains a vague figure in this novel, until the very end, whereas Srma is depicted more clearly. In the beginning an impression is given that it was due to the desperate traditional attitude of the parents that Virasingha's problems began. As a result of a bitter dispute with his father, Virasingha goes away from home and lives alone in a dingy room and takes a teaching post in a private school where he meets Sumi, a student, who begins soon to be interested in his life. Virasingha is one of those men who thinks his problems are the most important in the world and every body must sympathise with him. Ramya continues to be concerned only with getting married and fails to understand Virasingha's life. He does not think of how she must be suffering and complains about her being too self conscious. Through Sumi's sympathy he gains courage to face life, but hesitates about his growing love for her. Both of them know they loved each other though they preferred to think of their relationship only as an ordinary 'teacher-student' friendship.

Samarasingha and Premaratna are two other characters in this novel who represent the normal and practical side of the teachers in modern Ceylonese society. Virasingha appreciates their friendly concern for him and the courage and ease with which they face life. Premaratna asks Virasingha to forget about Ramya and to marry Sumi which seems to be the most sensible solution though the latter does not admit at first. When he eventually makes up his mind to marry Ramya and goes

to see her she lets him down. After this incident Virasingha begins to think in a different way, and sees things in clearer perspective and decides to go back to his parents. From his decision to visit Sumi at her home we can guess that he will marry her.

The major theme in this novel is the spiritual and psychological experiences of Virasingha with regard to his conflicts and relationship with his parents, Ramya, his friends, and Sumi. The approach to this theme is extremely individualistic. The common social and cultural phenomena are driven into the background. On the surface of the story an attempt has been made at presenting a realistic account of the life of a particular layer of modern society. The teachers and other free lance journalists like Jayasena are so naturally and interestingly portrayed that we can assume that they are drawn from the actual experiences of the author. Through their lives we see how genuine human relationships, delicate feelings, honesty etc., have been destroyed and replaced by the competition of modern city life and commercial values.

In Sunanda Mahendra's third novel 'Eya Mese Siduviya' (Thus has it happened) we are confronted once again with the same social group as in his two previous novels. This time the hero is not a university graduate but a trained teacher. But his mentality and character is similar to the young intellectuals from the university with whom we have been familiar in a number of Sinhalese novels. One of the important characters in this novel is Kamala who is presented as a radical

university intellectual in the beginning but she becomes more and more interested in occult sciences and astrology etc., later on. In the first part of the story Karunapala's life is related in fast moving summary form which is rather dull compared to the previous works of this author. The area of experience found in this novel, when we consider it as a whole seems to be new and full of contemporary consciousness.

The story begins with Karunapala's early school days which we see from his point of view. He thinks of himself as different from others at school; finds it difficult to mix with them and becomes watchful of how natural feelings and desires were beginning to accumulate in his mind. The early life of Karunapala reminds us of Stephen Dedalus in Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Joyce's work has obviously exerted some influence on the first part of Sunanda's work. The latter part of the life of Karunapala has not been patterned on Joyce's character. At the beginning of his love affair with Kamala, the young hero was not sure whether he loved her in a normal way or was only attracted to her for her peculiar characteristics. The reader may find this relationship to be based chiefly on intellectual grounds. Without having any response from Kamala for physical contact Karunapala tries to kiss her, in which act he finds only a frigid indifference in the girl. In contrast with the mysterious character of Kamala, he meets Prema, the wife of the headmaster of the school where he was teaching. As the headmaster was more

interested in social work than in his family, Prema had been living a lonely life at home, without the love and affection she expected by marrying, Mr. Siriwardhana (the headmaster). Karunapala sees attractive feminine qualities in Prema which he could never find in Kamala and fosters a love for her which culminates in adultery. Only after committing adultery does Karunapala begin to think how he had been living in a small world of his own forgetting the reality about him. He realizes how strongly Siriwardhana must have loved his wife though he did not show it and also becomes extremely confused about the situation Prema was in. He finds it impossible to take her away from her husband and eventually decides to leave his job in that school.

The vision of life the author intends to express through this novel seems to be the banality of the life of some intellectuals in modern society and how they create problems for themselves and suffer as a result of suppressing the 'primitive' or 'natural' impulses. The only character in this novel who tries to suppress natural human feelings is Kamala. Perhaps the author's intention must have been to depict Karunapala also as a person of this type. But according to his behaviour he seems to us only as a normal young man in modern Ceylonese society. He is interested in both intellectualism and sex whereas Kamala is interested only in intellectual matters, which disparity makes it impossible for them to understand each other though they have known each other since childhood. The

sexual relation Karunapala could develop with Prema cannot be regarded as abnormal or of special significance, as the atmosphere at the school and the behaviour of Mr. Siriwarchana are presented in such a way that the reader begins to feel that it was going to happen, and when it actually happens it seems natural.

Valmiki Obata Kive Sita (1968) is centred upon the theme of a young boy's love for a girl who is older than him by a few years. In this novel Sunanda Mahendra has attempted to deal with a theme different from his previous novels and to express his experiences of a relationship with a 'virtuous' woman. The author has been highly moved by the qualities of a woman whose character is beautiful because of her tolerance, understanding, courage, tenderness and faithfulness. In the classical Sanskrit literature the famous ideal woman is 'Sita'; and Valmiki is supposed to be the author of Ramayana in which he made the character of Sita eternal, the ideal wife to whom all the Hindus aspired. Later in classical Sinhalese poems we find her name referred to as the embodiment of all virtues expected from a woman.(1) When we think about the historical or traditional significance of the title of this novel we can assume that it has been written as a tribute to a modern Sita.

The hero, Virasingha, is not from the familiar bilingual, middleclasses of Colombo, but from the country. He is always

(1) See Rahula, Totagamuve. Kavyasekara. Canto 1. Verse.15.

annoyed with his father's 'contemptuous behaviour'. Virasingha meets Citra on his visits to his friend, Senarat. When they fall in love they have to hide it from Citra's family as they knew that strong objections were inevitable. Senarat and Virasingha fail their examination and presently Citra takes up teaching. She is fond of small children and Virasingha approves her work, imagining that it would be a good distraction for Citra. Virasingha begins to work for a newspaper and occassionally meets Citra secretly on her way back from school. Their secret love becomes known to Citra's family before long and Senarat writes to Virasingha asking him to stop this 'inappropriate' relationship. Citra does not show much excitement after this incident though Virasingha becomes quite confused. She realizes the impossibility of their love and encourages Virasingha in finding another suitable girl for himself. She is later married to Ranavaka, a choice made by her adults, and tries to be happy with him. However, she cannot forget Virasingha and tries to console him by inviting him to her house and introducing him to her husband. He meets her a few times thereafter during which visits he shows his affection for her by embracing her and even by trying to sleep with her. She recoils from his advances, being very kind to him at the same time. After some time, he finds that Citra's marriage with Ranavaka was not successful though she never complained. The novel ends with the sudden death of Citra which is not unexpected as she had been suffering from a

chronic illness for a long time.

Sunanda Mahendra has created some highly moral characters in this novel. Citra is the symbol of all good qualities. Virasingha is also as strict as Citra about morals in the beginning, for instance, hating his father for committing adultery. But with time he forgets his 'principles' and wishes to have sex with Citra after she was married. Even though she begged him again and again to find a girl friend for himself he would not do it and keeps hoping for Citra. These features make his character complicated while Citra's character is clear, though we never feel it as common or dull.

The beauty of the language and impressive imagery and skilful portrayal of character make this novel interesting.

When we consider the evolution of the language of Sinhalese fiction the works of the new generation of writers such as Gunasingha and Sunanda Mahendra seem to be of great significance due to their attempts at breaking away from the traditions of the contemporary major writers such as Wickramasingha and Saratchandra. Most of the features seen in the language of Siri Gunasingha are to be found in the language of Sunanda Mahendra which shows that the latter has greatly admired the former. From the above accounts of the themes and nature of the novels of Sunanda Mahendra we can see that he has tried to become an innovator of the Sinhalese novel as far as the form and subject-matter is concerned. He has been equally concerned about the enrichment of the language, in which he has mostly

followed the style of Hevanalla. In the following discussion of his language we shall be chiefly examining the styles in Hevanali Ada Minissu and Guruvarayakuge Katava.

Sunanda's first novel Hevanali Ada Minissu is told in the first person and the direct presentation of the stream of consciousness makes it a mixed-form novel. The general narrative which is often mixed with reported speech and summary suddenly breaks into interior monologue:

"ayyō Śrīma oyā tavama kiyavanne oya kabal Denis Robins ge potda hari bolaṇḍa potne, mama kīmi. Śrīma urahisak gāssuvāya. mama īta kāmātiyi. Śrīma ē pot tula jīvatvīma-
~~ta da pūyava tīvat vīmatada vabhesavi āvā bolaṇḍa pot~~
kiyevvat ekama vidiha. ekama katā rāmuva ekama siduvim
pela. vikāra. ehet ehi āti nissāra kama akkāṭa kiyādi-
yahāki mut Śrīmaṭa avabōdhakaradiya nohākiya. Denis
pela. vikāra. ehet ehi āti nissāra kama akkāṭa kiyādi-
 yahāki mut Śrīmaṭa avabōdhakaradiya nohākiya. Denis
Robins. Ruby Eyars. Holken. araken. meken. modayanva
modiyanva. ravatāla salli garana potkarayo."

(O, Srīma, do you still read Denise Robins's books, aren't they of a very low standard? I asked. Srīma shrugged one of her shoulders. I love that. Srīma likes living in those books. She tries to do that. I have realized recently that those are low-standard books. Even if you read ten of those books they are of the same pattern, the same structure, the same sequence of incidents— all nonsense. I can make my sister understand the uselessness of those books but it is impossible to convince Srīma. Denise Robins. Ruby Ayres. Hall Caine. that Caine, this Caine. These are writers who make profit by deceiving foolish men and women.)

(1) Sunanda Mahendra De Mel. Hevanali 'Ada Minissu. Colombo. 1964.p.8.

This is a good example of the mixed style in Sunanda's works. The first three sentences are narrative. Then the narrative changes at once to reflective and then into stream of consciousness. The underlined phrases in the quotation present the stream of consciousness. This style makes us understand the character closely and clearly. In this instance, it presents one aspect of the struggle between Victor and Srīma. The discrepancy of interests of the two characters develops into a very vital stumbling block which ultimately breaks up their relation. Disconnected words such as 'vikara', 'araken, meken' etc., are to be taken in the same way as 'bambuva' which we saw in the language of Hevanalla. These words are used not for alliteration, but to show the illogical, confused nature of the consciousness. Let us take another example. Srīma is Victor's first love and when he thinks of her his adolescent mind fills with sentimental joy and excitement.

"Śrīmaṭa mā tula mahat biyak rāṇḍī tibuni. Śrīmagē atak āllīmaṭa hō muhuna sipa gāṇīmaṭa magē yaṭihite balavat lādikamak tibuna namut maṭa eya māḍagata hāki śaktiyak tibuni. siyalla kriyā kerenne apē lingika lādikam anuva. Froyid gēda koheda matayak. Śrīmage diga sihin āngili mesaya mata ehā mehā duvaddi maṭa evā allā tada kirīmaṭa āsāvak tibuni. diga sihin gītamaya āngili tuḍu. mā yaṭasin lamadat muhunat desa bāluvemi. ehet ganitaya niravula mage sitaṭa galā eyi. āge āngili tuḍu. evā gitārayak sitārayak vādanaya kirimaṭa hō citrayak āṇḍimaṭa bihivu ēvāya. Śrīmage kamaṇīya sihin dēhaya. maṭa mē siyalla issaraṭa vaḍā mānavin dān penē. mā kiyavu sāma caritayakma

āyagē yayi maṭa hituni. Ālisa. Gartrud. Lina. Noriko. Śrīma. vikāra. me mona vikārayakada? navakatāvaka ena kalpita carita jīvitaye inna ātta gānun ekka sansandanaya karanne kōmada?" (Hevanali Ada Minissu.p.25)

(I was very scared of Srīma. I could therefore, suppress the strong desire in my mind to touch her hand or to kiss her face. All our actions are controlled by our sexual impulses. Perhaps a theory of Freud. I had a desire to squeeze Srīma's long slender fingers when they were moving on the table. Long, thin, melodious finger tips. I cast a secret glance at her face and bosom. And still the mathematics flows clearly in my mind. Her finger tips. These are naturally shaped to play a, guitar, sitar or to hold a brush. Srīma's captivating slim figure. Now I can see all this better than before. I thought Srīma was like all the heroines in the novels I had read. Alice, Gertrude, Lina. Noriko. Srīma. nonsense. What nonsense is this? How could we compare fictitious characters in novels with the real women of our lives?)

Here we see Victor's admiration of Srīma at the beginning of their relationship. The hesitation of Victor's mind to kiss the girl and the style in which it is presented remind us of the stories of James Joyce. The influence of Joyce is seen not only in Hevanali Ada Minissu but also in Eya Mese Siduviya. The following excerpt will show the occasional resemblance of Sunanda's characters to those of James Joyce:

"They seemed to listen, he on the upper step and she on the lower. She came up to his step many times and went down to hers again between their phrases and once or twice stood close beside him for some moments on the upper step, forgetting to go down, and then went down.

His heart danced upon her movements like a cork upon a tide. He heard what her eyes said to him from beneath their cowl and knew that in some dim past, whether in life or in revery, he had heard their tale before. He saw her urge her vanities, her fine dress and sash and long black stockings, and knew that he had yielded to them a thousand times.....

-She too wants me to catch hold of her, he thought. That's why she came with me to the tram. I could easily catch hold of her when she comes up to my step: nobody is looking. I could hold her and kiss her.

But he did nothing: and, when he was sitting alone in the deserted tram, he tore his ticket into shreds and stared gloomily at the corrugated foot board."(1)

What the Sinhalese novelist lacks is the detachedness seen in Joyce. He makes his character more sentimental though the inspiration is obviously Joyce. Sunanda's technique in the above passage is mixing reported speech with stream of consciousness. The word 'vikara' occurs again, making it a key-word or a cliché of this character. The phrase 'eva gitara-yak....' is reminiscent of the style of Hevanalla.

Sometimes in depicting the adolescent exhilaration at the touch of the experiences of first love Sunanda becomes even more indebted to Joyce:

"mama mage prēmaya kisivekuṭa nokīvemi. ādaraya pilibaṇḍa kisidu kalpanāvan bihiviya nohāki tanvaladi pavā Sṛimage svarūpaya mama sihiyaṭa naṅgā gattēmi. sāma udāsana-kama kisiyam kāryayak kirīmaṭa nāti mama janelaya tulin taruna hirurās vihidena ayuru balā siṭiyēmi. ēvā ceri gasvala, gāḍinaya, āntūriyam gasvala vihidī nava panak devayi.

ē prānaya mage mulu sirura purā duvannāk meni. mema hiru

(1) Joyce, James. A Portrait of the Artist As a Young Man. London. 1952 ed. pp. 71-72

nāṅgena udāsana kotaram piyakaruda? nāṅgena hiru gana hariyaṭa kavīyakvat liyā nāta. Śrīmā sangītaya igenī-maṭa yāmaṭa gedarin navayaṭa pamana nikutveyi. mamada velāsanin yannē ā hā katākaramin giya hāki bāvini. ā gedarin nikutvī ṭikak dura yannaṭa hāra mama da āya pasu pasa hora giyemi. manda durak giya pasu āya mā pasu pasin ena bava haṇḍunā gani." (Hevanali Ada Minissu. p.28)

(I didn't tell anybody about my love. I recalled Srīma's beauty even at the places most hostile to love. Every morning when I didn't have any thing to do in particular I used to enjoy the (beams of the) morning sun coming through the window. The morning sun falls upon gardenia, cherry, and anthurium plants rekindling life in them. I feel as if that new life is spreading all over my body. How beautiful is this morning at the sun rise. No one has even written a good poem about the rising sun. Srīma leaves home at about nine to go to her music class. I too leave early so that I can talk with Srīma. A little while after she leaves, I begin to follow her secretly. After walking a little way she realizes that I am following her.)

The following extract from Joyce is comparable with the above passage:

"Her image accompanied me even in the places most hostile to romance."

"When she came out on the doorstep my heart leaped. I ran to the hall, seized my books and followed her. I kept her brown figure always in my eye and, when we came near the point at which our ways diverged, I quickened my pace and passed her. This happened morning after morning. I had never spoken to her, except for a few casual words, and yet her name was like a summons to all my foolish blood." (1)

(1) Joyce. James. Dubliners. Penguin. 1971, 'Araby', pp. 28-29

These examples show that Sunanda has admired the stories and style of Joyce a great deal and he has naturally remembered some interesting sayings and incidents of Joyce while writing his novels. The development of the characters is not identical or similar. The similarity is seen only in some incidents and descriptions as seen in the above examples. Vividness in the style is the great advantage that Sunanda has achieved as a result of his admiration of Joyce. Due to the difference of the characters and atmosphere Sunanda has not been able to create a humour as subtle as that in Joycean style. (Siri Gunasingha has also depicted the juvenile ecstasy of first love in Hevanalla in which he laughs at his hero even more bitterly than Joyce. See Hevanalla p.132. 'Lōkayē āti aganāma vastuva gahanīyayi.....')

In his books Sunanda has attempted to develop the poetic quality and the expressive power of the language of fiction, mostly preferring the simplicity in the modern poetic and spoken idiom to figurative classical styles. For instance:

"Sirivardhana kotaram satuṭin jīvat vanneda? ohuge ādaraniya biriṇḍa, ādaraniya pustakālaya. potin pota ekatu karala goḍanaṅgāpu pustakāle. ē siyallama ohuge jīvitayayi. jīvite hāma sapata hāma rasaya jīvite. midulē hiṭuvā āti saman picca mal. ēka biriṇḍage vāḍak. biriṇḍat saman picca malak. Śrimat mal vavāvi. ā āntūrium mal vavāvi. āntūrium valaṭa mā kāmāti nā. kavi haṅgīmaka gena nodena mal." (Hevanali Ada Minissu. pp.37-38)

(How happily Sirivardhana lives! His dear wife and his dear library. The library built by collecting books one by one. All this is his life. All joy and happiness

in life. The jasmine flowers growing in the yard. That is his wife's work. The wife is also a jasmine flower. Srma also will grow flowers. She will grow anthurium flowers. I don't like anthurium. Those flowers give no poetic feelings.)

As we have seen in the previous examples this is also written in mixed style. This style suits the introspective mood of the character. Victor is a poet and he observes the world like a poet. Siriwardhana and his wife are the friends of Victor. First he admires everything about them; Mr. Siriwardhana as a good teacher and his wife as a charming friend. He thinks of Siriwardhana as a happy man and the imagery of the library implies though satirically his regard for Mr. Siriwardhana as a scholar. The rhythm of the phrase, 'potin pota..' adds to the poetry of the style and so does the phrase 'birindat saman picca malak.' Here it is not only the sound of the words but the image of the jasmine flowers which indicates Victor's fondness for Mrs. Siriwardhana. This imagery is connected to the image of the anthurium implying Victor's attitude to his girl friend Srma and creating a comparison between the two ladies simultaneously. Mrs. Siriwardhana likes the jasmine flowers which is romantic and nice smelling, whereas Srma likes the anthurium, with no romantic allusions or smell. The rhythm of the sentences as well as the vocabulary is similar to that of Sinhalese free-verse. For example, the phrase 'jivite hama sapata hama rasaya jivite', is taken from a poem by

Siri Gunasingha.(1)

In Guruvarayakuge Katava conversational language is used to a large extent. The normal method of including dialogues is not followed; and it is incorporated in the narrative. The opening passage of this novel is an example:

"toṭa mehe inna bārinan man kiyana vidihāṭa tō ōnā dihāka pala magē āhaṭa nopeni. avajāṭaka balla. tāṭta magē muhunaṭama kaḍā paniyi. maṭa ē velāvē karagata hāki deyak novīya. apa atara basa digin digataṭama vāḍī yana ayuru maṭa pratyakṣaya. ovu mama avajāṭaka balla, ehema ekāge tāṭta kavuda? māva mē lōkeṭa jāṭaka keruve mokaṭada? mama ē prasnaya miṭa ihatadī vareka āsuvemi. ovu uṃba vage ekekuva jāṭaka keruva eka tamayi vāradda. tāṭta kiyayi.ammā karabāgena hiṭiyi. ammāṭa karagata hāki deyak nāta."

(Guruvarayakuge Katava.p.1)

(If you can't live here as I tell you, get out of here and go where ever you like, you dirty dog. Father shouts in my face. I did not know what to do at that time. I was sure that the quarrel between us was growing. Yes, I am a dirty dog, what is the father of such a dog then? Why did you make me come into this world? I have asked this (once) before. Yes, it is my fault to have brought some one like you into this world, says my father. Mother keeps quiet. She cannot do anything.)

By means of this mixed style the narrative and the drama can be put together creating a fine feeling of the immediacy of the action. In the conventional novel the method is to present the narrative and descriptions separately. Sunanda

(1) Siri Gunasingha. Abhinikmana. Maharagama. 1958.

'Jīvitē hāma sāpata

hāma rasa jīvite

buddhiyē jūjakata

āmbeni koṭa dunimi dān.' (from the last poem of the collection)

Mahendra follows this method occasionally in his novels.

An important aspect in Sunanda's novels is the use of this mixed style to present the stream of consciousness of characters. Consider the following instance where the language reflects the confusion in the mind of the character most effectively:

"mamā Prēmāratnāge katāven maṇḍak kipī niśśabda vemī. klab ekē vahalē savikara āti fān kārakeyi. baṁba gananak ātin kīpa denek tennis sellam karānu penē. pittaṭa ṭanis bōlaya vadina viṭa bum bum yana haṇḍak nānveyi. mama dān hoṇḍaṭama kālakanni velātiyennē munva āssaraya karala tamayi. maṭa inna tibunē magē pāḍuvē. kāmarayaṭa gihilla nidā gattanam ivarayi. mun ōnavaṭa vaḍā dannavā. ōnavaṭa vaḍā dannā evun maha bhayānaka evun. un kohomada mage hita danne. nikan haya hatarak danne nāti mōḍayo ugatunṭa vaḍā hoṇḍayi.", (Guruvarayakuge Katava.p.84)

(Premaratna's talk makes me angry and I keep quiet. The fans are turning on the ceiling of the club. Some people are playing tennis a few yards away. The ball makes a 'boom', 'boom' noise when it hits the racket. It is because of the company of these (fools) that I have become as miserable as this. I might have kept to myself. I^t would have been better if I had gone to my room and slept. These guys know too much. Those who know too much are very dangerous. How do they know what I am? Complete idiots, who do not even know A B C are better than these educated ones.)

"...umbala etakotavat mana ganilla me Virasingha mona-vage minihekda kiyala. klab eke anit evun ma desa bala gat gamanmaya. un hitanne mata pissu kiyala. mama kata karanne atta. hik. hik.hik.luk at dat ful. hi ot tu bi a pikuliya karakta. a trajik kes. ona deyak kiyapuvave.

mama mokaṭada eka ekāge katavalata āhunkan denne."

(Guruvarayakuge Katava.p.85)

(.....at last then you will realize what sort of a man this Virasingha is. The others at the club continue to stare at me. They think I am mad. But I speak the truth. Ho.Ho.Ho. Look at that fool. He ought to be a peculiar character.—a tragic case-(1) Let them say what they like. Why must I bother about their talk?)

On this occasion Virasingha is with some of his friends at a club where he becomes irritated about the inability of his friends to understand him. The focus is on the atmosphere as well as on the mental condition of the character. From the beginning of the story a resentment has been growing in Virasingha's mind. He was angry with the situation at home and then the surroundings of his lodgings make him more angry. The same thing happens with his friends; and in the above passage we see how he struggles against the hostile atmosphere. He comes to the club because of his friends, but it is not a favourable place for his distraught mind. The imagery of the fans and the tennis players indicate the uneasy nature in his mind. He cannot concentrate on one aim. The 'boom' noise of the tennis ball is a symbol of the hostility and the futility of the atmosphere which reinforced Virasingha's anger and despair. The sentences and phrases beginning with 'mama dan hondatama..' present the stream of consciousness in the author's favourite vivid style. The direct use of English phrases ('look at that fool') intensifies the drama of the situation

(1) Narrator's own words.

and exemplifies how closely the author follows the natural speech of his characters.

Let us consider another passage from Guruvarayakuge Katava:

"ḍīsal dumriyak parisaraya devanat karavana śabdayen
nalāva piṁbagenā yayi. ē haṇḍin kan bihiri veyi. muhude
rala geḍi hos hos haṇḍin biṇḍī yayi. gē ātulata dalvuna
layiṭ eka. uḍukaya hā muhuna penena miniha. Ramyā pāmina
net vidā yayi. sālāye āti piyānova. ratupāṭa gavuma.
magē piṭata taṭṭu karayi. mē siyalla sankīrna citra
rasiyaki." (Guruvarayakuge Katava. p.140)

(A diesel train runs fast blowing its whistle which pierced the air. The waves break in the sea making a 'hos' 'hos' sound. The light in the house. The man whose bust and face were visible. Ramya comes, opens her eyes and turns back. The piano in the lounge..the red skirt. taps on my back. All these are complicated images.)

We find this occasion towards the end of the story where Virasingha visits Ramya to make a final decision. At her home he faces an unexpected situation. There was no warm welcome from the girl and in fact she refuses even to talk with him. Virasingha becomes extremely confused and leaves Ramya's home in this painful and hopeless state of mind. On the one hand he is happy as he feels he is now free and he can propose to Sumi, the girl who understood him and cared for him. But the fast train and its penetrating whistle increases the pain he suffered from Ramya's attitude. The image of the breaking waves suggest the turmoil in his mind and the final breakdown of his hope in Ramya. The rest of the imagery, such as the light,

the piano, the man in the house etc., reflects Virasingha's experiences at this last visit to Ramya. They imply the cold, unfavourable situation he found and also Virasingha's attempt at justifying his preconceptions of Ramya.

The kind of style we have seen in the novels of these new writers can be taken as the latest trend in the language of Sinhalese fiction. They pay more attention to effectiveness and the presentation of character than to the conventions of the language. As is seen in the above examples realistic presentation of the stream of consciousness is one of the most important factors for the beginning of this new trend in the language.

Sunanda Mahendra's style is characterized by the careful use of symbols. His style suffers from a paucity of original imagery in contrast to the style of Siri Gunasingha. This may not be a great disadvantage for the success of his work, as he concentrates on the meaningful use of symbols. Some of the imagery in his novels is naturally symbolic for example we can consider the symbolic significance of the glass pane in Hevanali Ada Minissu and the 'thunbergia' flower in 'Valmiki Obata Kive Sita'. Like the symbol of the shadow in Hevanalla, a glass pane is used in Sunanda's novel at various important phases of the story so as to be entwined with the central theme. From time to time, Victor, the hero, comes up to the chequered glass panel and looks through it at the outside world. The thunbergia flower is referred to from time to time in Valmiki Obata

Kive Sita, reflecting the attitude of Virasingha to Citra and his presentiment of their future. The use of the symbol of the glass pane can be seen in the following extracts:

"apē janēla valaṭa yodā ātte mal vīduruya. evāyin bāluviṭa anit vīduru valin men piṭatin āti vastu pahadiliva nopene. rātriya vatma lēn ekē viduli pahan dālve. eviṭa mama janēlayē vīduru tahaḍuvaṭa āsa lankoṭa balami. piṭaṭa āti vastu kisivak vinivida nopenetat piṭatin āti eliya nisā ehāṭa mehāṭa vihidīgiya irikāli dahasak pamana penē."

(Hevanāli Āda Minissu.p.7)

(Some glass with floral patterns has been used for our windows. Unlike other glass, outside objects cannot be seen clearly through this glass. The light on the lane is turned on at nightfall. At that time I go to the window and try to look through, keeping my eye close to the glass. Although none of the objects outside are visible clearly, I can see a maze of thousands of lines from the light outside.)

After this Victor repeats this action on various occasions and it develops into a symbol in the novel. The vision is slightly changed at every successive instance to suit the current mental state of the character:

"mama ingirisi keṭi katāvak dekaḥk sinhalāṭa parivartanaya kalemi. eyin pasu maṭa ātivuna satuṭa nisā mama istōppuve ehāṭa mehāṭa āviddemi.janēlaye mal vīduruva laṅgaṭa gos elipāṭta bāluvemi. mal vīduru tulin penenne kesēda? penenne iri kāli dahasak pamani.(op.cit.p.18)

(I translated one or two English short stories into Sinhalese. Feeling very happy after that I walked about in the parlour. Then I went to the window and looked through the floral glass. What does one see through this glass. Thousands of lines only.)

Thus the symbol of the glass pane develops with the progress of the story implying a sense of the difficulty of gaining a clear view of reality for Victor and the others of his family, as the pattern of values they appreciated was obstructing their vision like the thick floral glass. In the middle of the story, this symbol is used as follows:

"mama istōppuve ehā mehā āvida vasa ati janelaya tulin
pitāṭa bāluveni. pārē viduli pahana dālvē. mal vīduru-
ven penennē irikāli. ehāṭa mehāṭa giya irikāli. dahasak
irikāli. māda nābhiya men āttē viduli balb eka."

(op.cit.104)

(After walking to and fro in the parlour for a while I stopped and looked through the closed window. The electric light on the lane was burning. Numbers of lines could be seen through the glass. Lines confused in all directions. A thousand lines. What looks like the nucleus of the pattern is the bulb.)

Unlike in the previous situation, Victor is confused and irritated here, and accordingly he sees the usual pattern of lines as more complex and more puzzling. The lines of all lengths in great numbers indicate Victor's agitated and restless mental state. He is annoyed at the way his brother was treating Piyawati and extremely worried about the future of his sister and his forebodings of the sudden death of his parents. He knows that he must think realistically, though reality is vague like the dim nucleus of the maze of lines, the bulb.

When he reaches the climax of his problems this is how Victor sees the same confusion of lines through the window

pane:

"mama vasā āti janēla tahaḍuvē mal vīduruva veta muhuna oba piṭata bālīmaṭa tāt kalemi. kisivakvinivida pāhadiliva nopenē. piṭatin āti pahana nābhiyak. ē nābhiya vaṭā vāṭuna eliya siya dahasak irikāliya. ehāṭa mehāṭa vihindunu kuḍā irikāliya. hiruge rasmi kaḍamba siyadahasak patita vūvak meni. ē irikālivala kramavat hāḍahuru kamak nāta. hāḍahuru kamak nātikama ektarā hāḍahuru kamaki. sihin iri. mādin bindunu iri. ḍigaṭi iri. iri. iri. iri. iri."(op.cit. p.195) the last passage.)

(Pressing my face on the floral glass pane of the closed window I tried to look through it. Nothing is clearly visible. The bulb outside is a nucleus. The light that emanates from it is a thousand segments of lines. They are like thousands of beams of the sun. There is no regular pattern of these lines. The lack of a pattern itself is a pattern. Thin lines. Lines broken in the middle. long lines. lines. lines. lines. lines.)

The meaning of the title of this novel is 'Men with crooked shadows', and we may conjecture that the lines in this imagery are suggestive of the psyche of the characters in the novel. As we have already observed, the thick, chequered glass is the social atmosphere these people have built up for themselves which confines them into their own small world, preventing them from seeing the reality. The glass is thick and beautiful, though it is an obstruction which prevents them from seeing anything clearly from outside or inside. And the window is closed most of the time. Victor does not dare open it and look out, probably for fear of seeing the reality

symbolized by the bulb which he thinks of as the nucleus.

We have seen that Sunanda Mahendra has been influenced by James Joyce to a large extent as regards some aspects in his style, the form and the presentation of character. In the symbolic use of imagery too Joyce seems to have exerted some influence on Sunanda, the best example, perhaps, being this symbol of looking through the floral glass:

"This was the end; and a faint glimmer of fear began to pierce the fog of his mind. He pressed his face against the pane of the window and gazed out into the darkening street. Forms passed this way and that through the dull light. And that was life."

(A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.p.115)

This similarity may be a coincidence, but it can also be taken as borrowing the image from Joyce and developing it to suit the theme of Hevanali Ada Minissu.

The purple thunbergia flower with a black bee in it is the most conspicuous and interesting symbolic image in Valmiki Obata Kive Sita, Virasingha and Citra both like flowers. But Virasingha does not like this particular flower because of its colour and the black bee that always comes to it:

"ē vanaviṭa ā maṭa katā kalē Vīrē yanuveni. ā maṭa pen-
nuvē lā dam pāṭāti, tambarrjiyā malaki. ehi kisiyam
piyakaru kamak da biyakaru kamak da viya. mama ē mala
desa balā siṭiyemi. ē mal vala ātulata kalu bamarun
da āta. kalu bamareku malaṭa ringā gat viṭa ū da male-
hima koṭasak lesa penē."(Valmiki:p.20)

(By that time she had started to call me Vire. She showed me athunbergia flower, which is light purple in colour.

This flower was beautiful and frightening at the same time. I looked at that flower. There are black bees inside these flowers. When a black bee enters the flower it too becomes a part of the flower.)

By this time Virasingha and Citra had just started to be affectionate and to understand each other. Virasingha had, however, thought a lot about Citra from the beginning and he knew how tender, fragile and sensitive she was. This preconception led him to cultivate a fear about the future of Citra in particular and their love in general. According to the way the story ends, when Citra dies, we begin to realize the meaning of some of the symbols. The dual nature of the flower, being beautiful and frightening, is suggestive of the sudden death or imminent disaster that was hidden behind the charm and beauty of Citra's life. The style is more restrained and the tone is more poetic in this novel than in the earlier novels of the author. Let us examine another occasion of the use of the same symbol:

"Citrā pāsāla āri gedara pāmīna istōppuve maṇḍa vėlāvak sakman karayi. anaturuva puṭuvaka iṇḍaganiyi. nāvata nāṅgiṭa baṭa pālalla laṅgaṭa gos eya ihalāṭa karayi. metek velā dāḍiva tibunu hirurās malānika bavaṭa hāri āta. gas vāl siyalla penennē niścala chāyārūpa rāsak meni. siyalla noselvī āta. kālayada nogevenu penē. tamabarjiya malaka ātulata vasa siṭinnē kalu bamareki. malat satvayat ven ven vaśayen sālakiya 'nohakiya...."

(After coming home from school Citra walks about in the parlour for a short while. Then she sits in a chair. Again she gets up and goes to the Venetian blind and

rolls it up. The blazing sun has just begun to fade. All trees and hedges seem like still pictures. Everything is still. Time too does not seem to be passing. It is a black bee which perches in a thunbergia flower. It is difficult to separate the insect from the flower.)

Here we find not only the image of the flower but another image too; i.e. the scene of Citra waiting in the parlour and rolling up the venetian blind. This is a powerful image of the loneliness of the girl and the routine life at her home. Virasingha imagines a thunbergia flower and a black bee. Again he thinks of the inseparability of the flower from the insect, which recalls his fear of an unexpected death for the girl. The laconic style creates vivid imagery as is seen in the reference to trees as a still picture.

Heavenly? Heavens!
In our discussion of the language of Guruvarayakuge Katava we saw how jasmine and anthurium flowers were used symbolically to illustrate two different characters. In this work the symbol of the thunbergia flower is developed strikingly in the same way as the glass pane in Hevanali Ada Minissu. At a later stage of the story we find how Citra feels about the thunbergia flower.

"apa gedara giya viṭaka tavat mal pāla kihipayak genāvit midulē pāla kala yutuyayi kalpanā kalā. magē dāsaṭa nitarā purudu tamabarjiyā mal vālak pālakala yutuyayi hituvā. maṭa in obada matak veyi. ēva itā ikmanin vāḍī mal haṭa gannavā. maṭa ēvā desa balāgena siṭiya hākiyi."

(op.cit.p.89)

(I thought that I must bring some more flower-plants when I go home again, to grow in our yard. I thought that I must plant thunbergia as it is so familiar to my eyes.

It will remind me of you as well. Thunbergia grows rapidly and flowers quickly. I like to see it.)

This is Citra writing to Virasingha. She too remembers thunbergia flowers. Her attitude to this particular flower is different from that of Virasingha. It brings pleasant memories of the past to Citra because she enjoys the beauty of the flower in a different way from Virasingha. She is not scared of the black bees; probably she prefers to see both beautiful and frightening aspects of life. The employment of symbols with a proper understanding of their importance in portraying the character, and with appropriate coherence with the motive of the novel, can be regarded as a significant feature in the language of the novels of Sunanda Mahendra. He disregards some of the common grammatical rules of the written language. (The interchangeable use of 'ma' and 'mama' is an example which may be found frequently in Eya mese siduviya and Valmiki...; according to the grammar of written Sinhala, the form 'mama' is used with the verb forms ending with 'mi'. But this writer mostly uses 'ma' with 'mi' verb forms.) He is more fond of narrative than of dialogue; and the narrative is usually used together with conversation which is again mixed with interior monologue.

R.R. Samarakoon. A promising talent.

Samarakoon is noteworthy as a modern novelist due to the novelty of his subject-matter and his independence in depicting character, though he is less enthusiastic in experiment

than the other young novelists we have discussed earlier in the present chapter. There are four principal novels to his credit: Gāhāniyakage Caritayak (A woman's Character)(1960), Dehadak Atara (Between Two Hearts)(1965), Ek Sabya Katāvak (One Decent Story) (1967) and Gē Kurullo (Sparrows)(1972). As the last of these works does not come under the period of our study we will not discuss it in detail with illustrative passages about the use of language.

Gahaniyakage Caritayak (A Woman's Character) is centred upon the life of a woman in the up-country of Ceylon. This change of setting, i.e. from Colombo or the south of Ceylon to a remote village in the up-country is a novelty for the reader. Samarakoon who was born and brought up in this area does not pay much attention to the day-to-day social or economic problems of these villagers; but he probes into the problems and nature of their private life. This writer does not regard villagers as guardians of a pure indigenous culture; hence he looks at them as normal human beings liable to sin and subject to natural human impulses. He expresses this vision through the characters in this novel; for instance, Nilame, the narrator of the story, witnesses how his elder sister was receiving improper favours from her father leading to an incestuous love. First he thinks father was so fond of Lasanda because she was the first child and he was attached to her simply out of paternal love. One day Nilame actually sees his sister in his father's bed and becomes greatly confused at mother's indifference even after

he had told her about the despicable behaviour of his father and sister. Nilame finds no peace at home and receives no solace from his girl friend, so he goes to see a prostitute, Jane Akka. After a few visits to her he falls into a worse situation as he realizes that his father too had been visiting the same woman. Despite father's reluctance, Lasanda is married to Tissa and she seems to be quite happy with him. One day Nilame goes to see his sister and finds that she was not really happy with her husband but was having another secret affair with her husband's father. Being unable to control himself in utter confusion, fury and panic Nilame strangles this elderly lover of his sister. Thus the end of the story is tragic and leaves the reader to wonder why on earth Nilame strangled the old man instead of his sister who was the cause of his troubles from the beginning.

Thus we find that in this novel villagers are not presented as the protectors of a great culture based on Buddhism. They are sinful and they are not typical of Ceylon only but may be seen in any other part of the world as well. When Nilame begins to get worried and angry about father's special favours for his sister it seems to be quite natural because he was only a boy at the time and that type of jealousy is very natural for his age. Then his doubts grow with time, due to evidence which is presented credibly. The most obvious defect in the novel is that the reader is not given any chance to look deep into the mind of Lasanda who is the most important

and complicated character in the novel. We hear about her behaviour from Nilame and occasionally we hear a few words from her, which is not sufficient to satisfy our desire to know why she was so fond of her father or of elderly men in general. We can guess that lack of opportunities to mix with young men and being very close to her father for a long time, and his personality, may have been some of the reasons. Although the mother's character has not been portrayed in great detail it is as interesting as all the other main characters in this novel. In one sense she may be taken as a typical Sinhalese villager from the way she maintains an indifferent attitude towards the vicissitudes of life.

Dehadak Atara (Between Two Hearts) is the second novel of this author in which he begins his favourite subject, i.e. office life in Colombo. As the title of the novel implies, this is a love story which seems to be written for the young readers who are fond of sensational love stories. Samarakoon has tried to save his novel from falling into the category of common place love stories by creating some depth in the character of Sunanda, the clerk who falls in love with Vasanti. It is the girl who tells the story in this novel. She is from an urban middle class family whose mother aspired to marry all her daughters to doctors, barristers and engineers. This is the mentality of most middleclass parents, which is exposed here as a hindrance to the happiness and personal freedom of the younger generation. Vasanti, soon after falling in love

with Sunanda, thinks that she can revolt against the will of her mother, and promises to marry him whether her mother likes it or not. Sunanda is from the country and his mentality is strictly governed by his values which are somewhat different from those of Vasanti and her family. Through carefully selected events the development of love between Vasanti and Sunanda is presented, and at the same time the disparity of their character too is implied.

Vasanti's mother objects to Sunanda because he is only a common clerk, but quite ironically she does not object to her own daughter doing the same job. Further the mother thinks that Sunanda would not be able to support a family with the meagre salary he gets as a clerk. When her other daughters meet persons doing 'respectable' jobs she treats them with more respect and stops paying any attention to Vasanti. The latter undergoes all this hostility and illtreatment at home for Sunanda's sake. But he does not understand Vasanti's situation and begins to be cruel to her. He is always suspicious about her and even when she gets a telephone call at the office he rushes to her table and asks who it was. After a few quarels between them which were due to the unreasonable doubts of Sunanda, Vasanti decides that it will not be easy for her to live with him if she marries him and accepts the love of her secret admirer Upali, who is a family friend and to whom there will be no objection from the mother.

The most interesting aspect of this novel is the presentation of the gradual growth of Vasanti's love for Sunanda

and its subsequent deterioration. As it is presented through a sequence of naturalistic occasions we can peep into the minds of the two characters. Vasanti does not attract our interest as a complicated character; she is only a normal type of girl who is confused between infatuation and real love and who thinks she can sacrifice everything for the sake of her first love, but begins to realize after a few bitter experiences that first love is not all that important. The social background is a considerable force controlling the characters, as we find that it was mainly because of the circumstances created by their respective social backgrounds that Vasanti and Sunanda failed to continue their relationship to a successful end. We can appreciate the objective depiction of character as a virtue of this novel but one might wonder whether the character of Sunanda should not deserve rather more sympathetic treatment.

Ek Sabhya Katavak (One Decent Story) is based on an interesting feature of modern Sinhalese society. The hero, Candana, represents the educated younger generation in upper class society while Podimenike, the heroine, represents that in rural society who come to cities to work. Candana intends to revolt against the values of his parents, and yet fails at first to break away from them until he meets Podimenike. Candana is a staff officer in the Central bank and Podimenike is an ordinary clerk working under him. He begins to change his strict attitudes towards the minor staff when he begins to love Podimenike whom he marries despite his parents' strong

objections. Thus Candana sacrifices a great deal to free himself from the dream world of bourgeois values of the upper classes; but Podimenike begins to drift in the opposite direction after her marriage. The simple rustic girl, as she was before marriage with Candana, now longs for high society and admires their fashionable manners; tries to become a high society lady and complains against Candana's new attitude to life. After some time Candana hears about Podimenike having a lover and yet does not get upset, takes his duty at office as more important than personal matters and by his unusual tolerance of the painful and despicable behaviour of his wife becomes a highly romantic and unique character.

Thus Candana is a new type of character in the Sinhalese novel; he is highly moral and his problems are presented with sympathy. With the help of some other characters such as Aruni, Manjula and Hilerien the superficial nature of the struggle of the middle classes is displayed through which we see why Candana wanted to escape from them. But life is such that he fails to gain what he expected by marrying Podimenike, as she begins to admire what he hates. The author attempts to analyse the mentality of these two groups of the modern young generation by this juxtaposition of Candana and Podimenike. Some of the new intellectuals like Candana look down upon the values of the westernized upper classes to which they really belonged and try to appreciate rural culture, fancying that they might gain a stable and genuine inspiration. The educated young

generation of the country side do not realize that they belong to such a stable and genuine culture and aspire for the values of the westernized society. Most of them, as a result, become frustrated, which aspect is depicted in many Sinhalese novels.

A large part of the story in this novel, as in Samarakoon's second novel, takes place in the office where the hero and heroine work. Samarakoon is familiar with office life; so he writes through his experiences. Therefore a realistic picture of the clerical workers and officers has been drawn in these two novels. This is a new aspect in the Sinhalese novel. Most contemporary and modern Sinhalese writers have not explored this area in modern Ceylonese society, instead they repeatedly write on university life, school teachers and on the themes of cultural conflicts. As a result of dealing with office life Samarakoon has occasionally used speech of the clerical servants. This feature of his language will be discussed in the following pages of this chapter.

Before starting to discuss the language in Samarakoon's style, it seems to be appropriate to say a few words about his latest novel, i.e. *Ge Kurullo* (Sparrows). In this novel, Samarakoon again takes up the theme of the life of clerks. But this time it is about an elderly clerk and the emphasis is on his problems at home; his struggle against growing economic problems and the education and future of his children.

In a close examination of the language of Samarakoon it will be clearly seen that he has not been keen in developing

an individual style. Although in ambition and the novelty of his subject-matter he may be considered as a modern novelist, he has followed the styles of contemporary novelists like Amarasekara, Jayatilaka etc. In his first novel, Gahaniyakage Caritayak, the general style is the same as that of the contemporary novelists with the single ideosyncratic characteristic of occasional use of the natural speech of the villagers in up-country Ceylon. Sometimes he deliberately uses appropriate rhetoric in order to enrich his descriptions with poetry. The dialogue is mostly full of drama, natural and straightforward. In his second and third novels, the conversation and introspection changes according to the change of the setting, i.e. the urban office life. These features in Samarakoon's language are exemplified in the following discussion.

The following examples are reminiscent of the vivid and simple style of contemporary novelists:

("Tāttāge kaṭa haṇḍaṭa savan dīmaṭa risiyak mā tula novīya. ohugē muvin gilihena hāma vadanakinma magē gata sitat dāveyi. tāttā katākale bohōseyin kalakirīmaṭa patvū ekakumeni. idiriyāṭa nerā āti ohugē dāsehi vūye darāgata nohāki dveṣayakāyi maṭa haṅgina. mama situvillēma midulaṭa bāsa galpaḍipelada pasukoṭa liṇḍa desaṭa giyemi. liṇḍa asalin galana kuḍā dolapāarak veyi. eyin egoḍa vīmaṭa damā āti kitul koṭaya mataṭa nāngī mama āta velyāya desa balā unimi. vel ivurehi kalu unagas paṇḍuru tulin ahasaṭa nāṅguna kiri kokku sivu denek Pūvālu kande tevatta desaṭa igilī yannaṭa vūha. ahasē visāla koṭasaka dam pāhati valā pelak rokvi āta. tava mohotakin vāssa kaḍa vāṭenu ātāyi maṭa sitina." (1)

(1) Samarakoon, R.R. Gahaniyakage Caritayak. Colombo. 1966. p.9

('I didn't feel like listening to my father. Every word that came from his mouth made my mind and body burn. He spoke like someone very disappointed. I felt that what one could see in his protruded eyes was unbearable hatred. Pensively, going down the steps I walked towards the well. A small stream flows by the well. Standing on the kitul trunk that served as a bridge to cross the stream, I looked at the far away fields. Presently four white cranes sprang up from the black bamboo bush and flew towards the tea-estate in Puvalu hill. A vast area of the sky was covered with purple clouds. I thought it would rain in a moment.')

Here the description illustrates the mental state of the character. The narrator in this passage is Nilame who dislikes his father's talk as he knew it was biased. The father is biased as regards his duty to his family as well as to the village of which he is the headman. Still Nilame cannot hate him or argue with him as he feels that his father was also suffering from his own problems. The narrator goes out of doors to be alone and the well, the stream and the vast stretch of fields indicate both solitude and the pacifying effect he expected by being alone. The images of the black bamboo bush and white cranes imply the sadness and sudden flashes of painful ideas in his mind. He looks at the sky and sees gathering clouds and feels it is going to rain very soon. This has been mentioned to intensify the sad, depressing mood the author intended to create. The same method of using nature with effective relation to the current mental states of characters can be seen in the following passages too:

"baṭa kālayakaṭa gini gattāk men amṃā nonavatvāma kiya-vayi. mama āṅgili dekaḥin desavan vasāgena yahanehi munin talāvē siṭiyemi. nivasin piṭavi hisa hārunu ata yāyutu yayi maṭa haṅgina. vyākulatvayen tāli poḍivunu siṭaṭa alpa mātrayaka āsvāsillakudu nolābeyi. savas yāmaye siṭa pāya kīpayak yana turu mama eka diḡaṭa nidāgena unnemi. rātri ahara pavā nogat bava maṭa sihivūyē mādiyam rāyehi mā ninden āharuna pasuvaya. evēlehi ahasē haṇḍa pāyamin tibina. janēlayen galā ena saṇḍaras saṇḍakaḡa pahana vāni raṭāvak anuva bittiyehi vātira āta. midule ceri gase atu naliyana ayuru ema raṭāva tula manā lesa sittam vī āta. vāv tera siṅgiti diya rāli naṭana ayurin atu iti selavenue cancala vū hadaka ātulu pātta mē yayi golu basakin kiyannāk meni. janēlayaṭa ihalin āti kavulu valin ādī ena pinna kāmaraṡa sisārā pātira yayi. mama porōnayen devura vasāgena dāta yahana mata obā, passaṭa vāruvi bohō velāvak saṇḍa rēkhavan desa balā unimi."(1)

(Mother goes on talking like a burning bamboo forest. I was lying in bed blocking my ears with two fingers. I felt like going away from home. My mind which is crushed by confusion gets no drop of consolation here. From afternoon I slept for several hours. It was only when I woke up at midnight that I realized that I had not even had my dinner. At that time the moon was shining. The moon-beams flowing through the window lay on the wall in a pattern similar to that of a Moonstone. In that pattern one could clearly see the reflection of the movement of the boughs of the cherry tree in the yard. Like the dancing tiny waves near the bank of a lake those boughs moved as if telling in a soft voice that this was how a restless heart moves. Through the hole over the window some mist was coming into the room. Covering my shoulders

(1) Samarakoon, R.R. Dehadak Atara. Nugegoda 1968. 2nd. impression p.270

with the sheet, leaning back on my elbows, I stayed looking at the moon beams for a long time.)

The novel, Dehadak Atara, from which this passage is taken abounds with descriptions like this. Here we find Vasanti, the heroine and the narrator of the story, observing nature in a situation of agony and despair. She is still madly in love with Sunanda about whom Vasanti's mother had been scolding her ever since she came to know about it. At this stage of the story the mother had completely stopped treating Vasanti kindly as a punishment for her obstinacy. She even does not care if Vasanti does not eat. This unsympathetic treatment by her mother and sister sometimes causes selfpity in Vasanti, but she continues to be firm in her love for Sunanda. Her admiration of the nocturnal phenomena on the above occasion is suggestive of her solitary fight at home as well as the sensitivity of her character. The images are presented in fine montage; the moon beams, their pattern on the wall, superimposing pattern of moving cherry boughs on the moon beams and the eventual attention to Vasanti's confused mind. She is disgusted, hurt, insulted, starving and her vision gradually becomes blurred, which may be the symbolic meaning of the mist filling in the room. Still she cannot sleep as she had slept several hours since afternoon; the night is soothing so she continues to admire the moon.

In the third novel of Samarakoon, Ek Sabhya Katavak, descriptions of atmosphere and mental states are enriched with lucid and striking imagery.

For example:

"karyāliya jīvitaya kerehi pera nopāvati priya manāpabavak hā udyōgayak mā tula kramikava vagāvi āti seyak maṭa kalyatma dānina. vividhatvayen torava, aramunu virahitava, ē ēkākarī svarūpayen galāyannaṭa vū jīvitaya hada tula satuṭa unana ayurin venasvī gosini. bālūtek mānayehi dākiya hakke, mā avaṭati lōkayehi bahala timira vinivida keremin, alutin pāya āti hiru eliyaka rāsvalaluya. kisiyam vādaka yedī siṭina mama sihinayakin avadi vū kalaka men hisa osavā vaṭa piṭa balami. boḍaya palāgena matuvana karaṭiyak men hita tula satuṭa mōduvemin pavati."(1)

(I perceived later on that a new liking and enthusiasm for office life was growing in me. This life which had been monotonous, aimless and routine had changed so as to cause happiness in my mind. As far as the eye could reach, what I could see was the rays of a newly arising sun piercing the thick darkness in the world around me. While absorbed in my work I lifted my head and looked around as if woken up suddenly from a dream. Happiness flourishes in my mind like a shoot coming out of a 'bodaya' (the top tender part of a palm tree.)

Here Candana, the hero in this novel, concentrates on the sudden change in his life which is the result of his love for Podimenike. In the previous passage from Dehadak Atara we saw how Vasanti was admiring the moon in her solitude, and here Candana thinks of a newly arising sun. The sun in this passage is imaginary whereas the moon in the other passage is real. Candana thinks in terms of rhetoric. At this moment he is in the office but he thinks of the thick darkness of the world

(1) Samarakoon, R.R. Ek Sabhya Katavak. Colombo.1967 p.191

around him, which is symbolic of his mental turmoil, and the beams of the new sun is his love which replaces the darkness in his mind with happiness. Sanskrit words such as 'priyamānāpa', 'vividhatvaya', 'virahita', 'ekākāri svarūpaya' etc., make this style elegant. Among these words he uses such terms as 'satuta unana' and 'satuta moduvana' creating beautiful harmony in the style. A word like 'mōduvana' is not used in combination with such words as 'satuta' in ordinary usage but with words meaning some kind of plants. (e.g. 'palati moduvigena enava'. Plants are coming up nicely). This new combination conveys the intended meaning quite effectively. In the same sentence we find Samarakoon using the words 'bodaya' and 'karatiya' which are specific words about plants in the spoken Sinhalese.

If we analyse a few passages of narrative from Samarakoon's novels we will be able to see that the same power and vividness as in the above examples is maintained in this aspect of his style too. Following is the instance where Nilame in Gahaniyakage Caritayak peeps into his father's bedroom to find him sleeping with Lasanda:

"....mama gāhena hadin yutuva, hañḍa nonagina sē piyavara obamin tāttāge kāmārayē dorakaḍa asala nāvātunemi. vevulana dātin ṭōc eka allāgena, mama ehi eliya aḍukoṭa biṭṭiyaṭa ella kalemi. tāttā tada nindaka vāṭi siṭṭiyi. ē asalama akkāda vātirāgena siṭṭiyāya. hardaspandanaya hiṭi gaman nāvātuna seyak maṭa dānina. mama dorapaluva badāgena gāṭa gāṭa etanin ayinvūye klāntava āda vāṭennāṭa yannāk meni. mage mulu āṅga patama dahadiyen nāvi gosini.

kākārena krōdhayen hembatva āti magē manasa hiri vāṭī
 āta. yathāṅvabōdhayen yutuva metek siduvī āti siyalla
 akārādi pilivelin gonu karannaṭa mama vehesa gatimi.
 tāttāt akkāṭ atara āti sambandhaya metaram tucca ekakāyi
 maṭa kisima viṭaka situnē nāta." (Gāhaniyakagē Caritayak.
 p.87.)

(....With trembling heart, stepping carefully and silently
 I went and stood by the door of father's room. Holding
 the torch with trembling hands and reducing its light,
 I flashed it against the wall. Father was fast asleep.
 Besides him lay my sister. I felt as if my heart stopped
 at once. Claspig the door I staggered away as if I was
 going to collapse. My whole body was soaked in sweat. My
 heart was benumbed, exhausted by boiling rage. I tried
 to meditate over the things that had happened hither to
 taking them in alphabetical order. It had never occurred
 to me that the relationship between my father and sister
 was so despicable.)

The style here is laconic but most effective. It is on
 this occasion that the doubts of Nilame about his father and
 sister reach their climax. The long and slow moving rhythm of
 the sentences suit the stealthy and suspicious movements of
 the narrator. In the dim light of the torch which Nilame
 flashes into his father's bed-room the reader too visualises
 the sleeping father and daughter which is the most appalling
 sight to the narrator. The sentence 'hardaspandanaya....'
 (I felt as if my heart stopped) is relatively short but expres-
 ses the sudden pain and anguish that occurred in Nilame's mind.
 Mental agony and confusion is made clear by describing how his
 body became soaked with perspiration. A term such as 'manasa
 hiri vati ata' ('mind is benumbed') despite being unusual shows

Nilame's anger and helplessness at the same time. He cannot shout or wake up his mother to show her what he has seen. The only thing he can do is to think over the things that had happened in the past and find out whether all that was leading towards this climax.

Narrative in the second novel of Samarakoon, in general, is tinged with an emotionality which reminds us of the style of the popular, sensational fiction:

"eliya ṭikin ṭika tunī vemin gos sālāva aṇḍurin vāsi giyēya. puṭu āṇḍa matavū magē ata Sunandage ataṭa asu-veyi. tiraya mata vāṭena situvam kerehi rāṇḍuna net ātiva siṭiyada, magē sita pirī yanuye vividhākāravū hāṅgīm valini. avāṭa vātāsrayē sisilasa gataṭa yantamin dānē. nagnavū urahisaṭa dānena ohugē pahasin āṅgapata kemen unusum veyi. avadiva siṭina iṇḍuran pinavīmaṭa mātula āti āsāva mā māḍa ganne dāḍi mānasika piḍanayaka-ṭa asuvemini. sita ekaṅga karagata nohākiva latavana mā vāni taruniyan tavat kī denek mē sālāve ādda? Sunandage detola mage nalala mata ātillenu maṭa dānina."

(Dehadak Atara.p.219)

(Light disappeared slowly and the hall became dark. My hand which lay on the arm of the chair was being touched by Sunanda. Although I was looking at the pictures on the screen, my mind was filling with various feelings. I felt a little coolness in the air. My body began to warm up slowly from his touch on my bare shoulder. I undergo a terrible mental agony to suppress the desire in my mind to gratify body. How many other girls must be in this hall worrying about their inability to concentrate? I felt Sunanda's lips touching my forehead.)

This is one of the happy moments in Vasanti's relation

with Sunanda. As this is her first love she enjoys every moment of it. To suit the simplicity of her character the narrative becomes aptly simple and tinged with sentimentality. Even with a kiss or by holding hands Vasanti gets excited and her mind fills with passionate feelings. Samarakoon's characters differ from most other characters in the Sinhalese novel due to their realistic attitude to love. They do not hallow love as permanent but regard it as human and changeable. Vasanti's decision to break with Sunanda and to accept Upali's love, despite her great regard for first love, may be the best example for this aspect of Samarakoon's characters.

The narrative style in the other works of Samarakoon is as pleasant and vivid as the style seen in the above passages, and especially in Ek Sabhya Katavak the ease with which he writes strikes us. The dialogue in his novels represent the natural speech of his characters. In Gahaniyakage Caritayak, as we have mentioned before, the idiom of the villagers is followed while in the subsequent novels the jargon of the offices is used for the sake of naturalness. For examples

"mama dān gihīna gaman polisiyaṭat gihin āve. heṭa Ādarapālayage rā allanna rālahamilā dennek enava. ōkaṭa yahatin innāṭa mama denne nāhā' meyin passe."

'dan itin ōka diggassanna hadanne ahaval ekaṭaya? balla kakula hāpuvayi kiyala api uge kakula hapanna yana eka harida? ūva jammanta vairakkārayek karaganne nātuva ōka otanin amataka karala dāna ekayi ātte, nēda mohoṭṭi ayye' yi ammā kivāya.

'anē uṃba onna ohe kaṭa piyāgena iṇḍin, magē yakā avus-
 sanne nātuva. apit unṭa pennanna ṓna apiṭat yamak
 karanna puluvan minissu vittiya. ehema nokalot ōkalā ape
 oluvaṭa ata hodanna enava. boruda mama kiyanne?' asamin
 tāttā silanāta ayyā desa bālīya.

'dān tērenava nēda mē gamē inna hātta āracci mahattayā
 ekka korōden inna vaga. kisi kenek visvāseṭa ganna nākayi.'
 'ēka mama dāna gatte ada iye neveyi. uṃbala hitannepa mama
 totta babekya kiyala. ohoma hiṭahallako...oya nagaran
 kārayinṭa mama laṅgadima dennān paṛa."

(Gahaniyakage Caratiyak.p.73)

('I dropped in at the police station too on the way. Two
 constables will come tomorrow to raid Adarapala's arrack
 den. Hereafter I won't leave him in peace.'

'Why do you still want to continue this? If a dog bites
 our leg should we bite its leg? Now you'd better forget
 it and not make him a life-long enemy. Don't you agree,
 brother Mohotti?' mother said.

'You just keep your mouth shut, and don't try to make me
 damn wild. We too must show them what we can do. Other-
 wise they'll try to wash their hands over our heads
 (to tease us). Isn't that true?'so saying, father looked
 at brother Silanata.

'Do you realize at least now that the whole lot in this
 village hate you, headman? It is bad to trust anyone.'

'It is not just lately that I have discovered that. You
 must not think I am a child. You just wait and see.

I'll teach those thugs a good lesson very soon.')

The tone and the rhythm of the phrases in this passage is
 obviously representative of the talk of the villagers of the
 up-country. Phrases such as 'ōkaṭa yahatin....' show the
 boiling anger of the speaker and it also shows the author's
 familiarity with the rural idiom. Also the phrases and idioms
 such as 'mage yakā avussanne..', 'ballek kakula...' 'jammanta

vairakkārayek...' are very rural and reveal the mentality of the speaker. Mother is always forgiving and she insists that father should not take revenge against Adarapala. On an occasion like this any Sinhalese country woman would use the saying 'ballek kakula...'. Sayings like 'oluvata ata hodanava' (to wash the hand over one's head) and 'yaka avussanava' (to make wildly angry) are originally the rural idiom but now are used by even the most sophisticated Sinhalese speaker. Most of the sentence-endings of this passage can be regarded as natural in the villagers' speech.

In the following extract from Dehadak Atara, Samarakoon uses the speech of young people working in offices:

"'vāḍak nātnam mē figars ṭika bālans karanna'. Edirisū-
riya rejistarayak genavit magē mēsaya mata tābīya.
'mē taram goḍak?'
'ara māshin eka tiyenne. mama kiyannam Piṭarta ēka
gēnnaya kiyala. dannavā nēda māshin eken āḍ karana hāṭi.'
'dannavā kavuda mēka venadaṭa karanne?'
'miṣṭa Sugatapāla.'
'itin eyāyiṭa karanna kiyanna.'
'eyā nivaḍu gihin. C.C. kivva Miss Sēnāratnata denneyi
kiyala.'" (Dehadak Atara .p.71)
('If you are free now, will you balance these figures?'
Edirisuriya brought a register and put it on my table.
'So much?'
'You can use that machine. I'll ask Peter to bring it
for you. Do you know how to add by the machine?'
'Yes, I know. But who does this usually?'
'Mr. Sugatapala.'
'So you must ask him to do it.'
'He is on leave today. C.C. asked me to give this to

you, Miss Senaratna.')

The realistic depiction of character in Samarakoon's novels is dependent to a large extent on the natural conversation. The government office-workers, who are the characters in most of his novels, are mostly bilingual. Until very recently most of them worked in English and spoke English in office and at home. When speaking Sinhalese they use a number of English words which are often related with their work. Thus in the example above we find the English words, 'figures, balance, machine, add, miss, mister,' and C.C.(chief clerk) being used unaltered as Sinhalese words.

As we have seen, Samarakoon is an admirer of the language of some contemporary Sinhalese novelists. The inspiration he has had from them is seen in his general descriptions and narratives, and especially when he tries to fuse his style with poetry. This attempt has sometimes been successful and sometimes has created only sentimentality and harm to the intensity of character. Consider the following examples:

1. "ohu hisa nūssāma hada mōhanaya karana sulu sihin hañḍakin mā āmatīya. ē hañḍa desavan tulin ātulu hada gābaṭa pī-visa giyē magē mulu sirurama pubudā lamini. Sunanda samaga bohō kālayak dāḍi premayakin pasuvū ekiyaka men ohu pilibaṇḍa nositū viru hāṅgumin hadavata uturā yannaṭa viya." (Dehadak Atara. p.107)

(He spoke to me in an enchanting tone without lifting his head. That tone entered my heart and made my whole body excited with happiness. As if I had been in love with Sunanda for a long time my heart began to overflow with unforeseen feelings about him.)

ii. "ohugē sparsayen mā labana āsvādaya vena kisima pirimiya-kugen kisima kaleka läbiya nohäkiyayi maṭa hāngē. ohu härennaṭa an kavaraku samaṅga vivāha vuvada mage jīvita-ya asārtaka vanu āta. palamu prēmaya avyāja pirisidu ekaki. eya sunu visunu vī gos anikaku haṭa ādaraya kalada, ēsē kala häkkē hitaṭa vada dīmen misa avanka hāṅgumin novē." (Dehadak Atara.p.213)

(I feel that I can never get the same satisfaction as I get from him from any other man. My life will be unsuccessful if I get married to any other man except him. First love is true and pure. If we try to love someone else after the destruction of first love we will have to be dishonest and force ourselves to do so.)

iii. "kalayutu vāḍak palak nomātiva nikarune gedaraṭa vī siṭina kala maṭa kiva nohäki taram kānsiyak dāneyi. kāmarayaṭa vī yahanehi vātira siṭimada sitaṭa viḍā gena dennaki. elesa vātira siṭa koyi ata kalpanā kalada, magē sitivili gaman karanuye ekama vaṭa ravumakaya."

(Dehadak Atara. p.250)

(I begin to suffer from an unutterable loneliness when I have to spend my time idly without doing anything in particular. To lie on my bed in my room too is depressing. When I try to think lying in bed like that, my thoughts take the same circle again and again.)

The first two of the above extracts show Samarakoon writing in a sentimental style which reminds us of Amarasekara's style in Yali Upannemi.(see Chapter 4) Due to the sentimental nature in the story and especially the emotional temperament of the narrator a style like this would not be completely inappropriate. In example No.iii, we can see Vasanti, the protagonist, suffering from mental agony caused by her problems. The language here is similar to that of most other modern

novelists who deal with the same kind of themes. The rhetoric used here e.g. train of thoughts running round the same cause, can be found in other novels on similar occasions. And so can the way Vasanti thinks of her first love, which makes her character common and shallow.

In the following passage from Ek Sabhya Katavak, the influence of Saratchandra can be seen on Samarakoon's style:

"Mānike mā purā visi vasarak koyyamma viṭakadivat prayo-
janayakaṭa nogena mullakaṭa damā tibuna hada vīnāva turul
koṭa, dūli gasā damā ehi tat pririmāda hāmatva vātira
siṭi iṇḍuran avadi kalāya. āya muna nogāsennaṭa eya kisi-
vekuta nopenī malabāṇḍī dirā patvannaṭa tibina."(p.239)

(Manike found the Vina of my heart which had been hidden in a corner without being used for twenty years, and holding it against her lap and dusting it and playing it, made my senses revive that were lying starved. Had I not met her it would have been ruined with rust and unseen by any one.)

This emotive and poetic style reminds us at once of that in Malavunge Avurudu Da of Saratchandra. But Samarakoon, as we have seen, does not maintain the same style throughout the whole work or in his other works. The restrained, meditative narrative and reflective tone of the narrator of this novel can be regarded as a result of the inspiration of Saratchandra's style. Samarakoon seems to be still attempting to develop a personal style. He has been able to present, in Dehadak Atara and Ek Sabhya Katavak, despite the lack of an independent and uniform style, the life and some new experiences of the modern

urban society, approaching it from a new direction.

Hemaratna Liyanaracci. (b.1938)

Liyanaracci gained recognition as a promising young novelist with his maiden work, *Pādaḍayakugen*, (1965) (From a Vagabond). The reader of this novel identifies himself with the narrator, Vijesiri, due to the intimacy and sincerity in his tone which indicates the skill and understanding of the author in the craft of fiction. The theme is the experiences of a young, sensitive school teacher, his struggle to lead a serene life and his eventual failure under circumstances created by unrewarding love and injustice and misunderstandings of society. At the time of the creation of this novel, Liyanaracci was a school teacher and like Sunanda Mahendra he too has made use of his experiences. The main concern of these novelists is not drawing realistic pictures of the life of school teachers or criticizing it from a social point of view but presenting an analytical picture of the psychological experiences of a certain person against the background of school life. The school-teacher heroes are not very different from the undergraduate and graduate heroes in the campus novel which was brought into popularity by the contemporary novelists.

This remark may be well exemplified by comparing Vijesiri, the hero in *Padadayakugen*, with Ranatunga in Amarasekara's *Yali Upannemi*. Both of them are highly sensitive, like fiction and poetry and are well versed in western literature, they see the world and life with the eyes of poets, hold strong and

strange views of love and are careless about their duties. Like Ranatunga, at the beginning, Vijesiri too regards love as pure and transcendental, refrains from any physical contact with his girl friend and subsequently suffers from frustration. But eventually, both Ranatunga and Vijesiri become more aware of physical needs and behave sometimes abnormally disregarding law and social conventions.

Vijesiri falls in love with Vimala, a teacher at the same school, tries to avoid any reference to marriage in conversations with her which is so often brought in by her, and gets annoyed when she expected some physical contact with him. No sooner does she realize that he wanted her only as a 'golden image' in his poetic world and not for a common human relationship than she breaks with him. Now he tries to see things in realistic perspective, pleads with her to love him again, in vain. Soon afterwards he gets himself transferred to another school where he achieves peace of mind by beginning a friendship with Padma who is one of his students. First he wonders why this small girl attracted him so much and finds that she had a close resemblance to his little sister who had died a few years ago. This fraternal love is misunderstood by the school and neighbours; and Vijesiri faces hostile criticisms and humiliation. Padma's father takes her away from that school and persuades the landlord to throw Vijesiri out of his lodgings.

After these bitter experiences Vijesiri determines to conform with social conventions and to live as a respectable

school master. Living in a small house with another teacher from his school, he spends most of his free time in reading literature and feeds his emotional life with the beauty of the nature. One day, after returning home from school he goes for a bath in the near by stream and feeling compelled by the pleasant weather and beautiful landscape begins to walk upstream into the wood. There in the wood he sees Siriyawati, a girl from his school, collecting firewood all alone. The dark quietness in the wood, the filtering sun through the thicket, and most of all the dark, healthy body of the girl makes him lose self control and he rapes her. On realizing the seriousness of his crime he gets into an hysteria and falls ill. When he recovers from it, he is tried and sentenced to a long imprisonment.

In this novel Liyanaracci employs three types of narrative techniques. The general technique is the first person point of view; the narrator begins to tell his story to a friend, which reminds us of some novels of Andre Gide (also some Sinhalese novelists too have used it prior to Liyanaracci.) To avoid unnecessary description and to create the illusion of reality some parts of the story are presented in diary form. When the story reaches its dramatic climax the narrative is superimposed with stream of consciousness. All these techniques have been exploited by other modern novelists, but Liyanaracci's language and dexterity in creating vivid pictures of character and insight into the problems of a young teacher in modern society

make him deserve to be place among the modern, experimental novelists.

Antima Dā (1967)(The Last Day) is Lyianaracci's second novel in which he deals with a theme based on the experiences of a poor, uneducated village man who aspired to be happy by educating his younger brother. The style as well as the treatment of subject-matter in this novel is more independent than in Padadayakugen. The elder brother, Suvanda, is the narrator of the story. Suvanda does not want to live as the others of his caste who were satisfied with their traditional way of life and thinks that he must educate his younger brother, so that he might get a government job. So Premadasa, the younger brother, is sent to an English school in town and Suvanda finds money for his education by working hard as the village boatman. At the end of his successful school education Premadasa is admitted to university making it even more difficult for Suvanda to support him. But he is not discouraged, making all kind of self sacrifice and taking great pains Suvanda helps his brother to accomplish his education.

After passing out from university as an engineer Premadasa gets a job in Colombo and gets married to the girl he had been in love with, without consulting his elder brother. Suvanda is still happy and thinks Premadasa is now superior to him, does not expect much help from him and sends his mother to stay with Premadasa. Some time later, Premadasa invites Suvanda to his house in Colombo and asks him to live with them. Suvanda

goes there, finds his mother quite happy in this new urban atmosphere but finds it difficult for himself to adapt to it. The new house, furniture, food, the speech, new friends of Premadasa, are all new and strange things to Suvanda, but still he feels that he is the one who is responsible for creating most of these things though he could not enter into this new world. Being unable to live in his own brother's house as an outsider he secretly leaves it one day and goes back to his village. He arrives at the river at night, remembers how he worked as the boatsman to earn a living and looks at the land and hut where he used to live which does not belong to him any longer as he had to sell it to get money for Premadasa's education.

Suvanda's character is somewhat similar to those of Isa in *Carita Tunak* and Podi Domba in *Pitāmaha* by Jayatilaka. All these characters attempt to perform their duty towards the other members of the family but become unhappy in the end. Suvanda is not a copy of Isa because he does not expect his brother to be grateful to him, nor does he complain about Premadasa's behaviour. The sister's character in *Antima Da* is also similar to the sisters in these two novels by Jayatilaka. Sometimes in fact we find that some thoughts and expressions of Jayatilaka's characters are not appropriate whereas Liyanaracci has been careful to free his characters from this defect. Through Suvanda's naive and sincere feelings and rustic manners we become intimate with him, which help us understand him deeply.

Antima Da is an enjoyable piece of fiction with its pleasant and terse style, though it is less experimental than Padadayakugen.

In our discussions on the work of other modern novelists we have seen that some of them have been influenced by some western novelists as regards several aspects of fiction. In the same way this novelist too shows influence of such western novelists as Gide, Camus and Lawrence. The main character in Padadayakugen bears a clear resemblance to that of L'Etranger of Albert Camus. The behaviour of Vijesiri just before the most important incident in the novel, his sensitiveness to weather and nature and the final trial show the extent to which Liyanaracci has drawn inspiration from Camus. The incident of Vimala breaking the shadow of the moon in the lake by throwing stones remind us of a similar incident in Women in Love by D.H.Lawrence.(1)

If we compare the following passages from Padadayakugen with a few passages from l'Etranger, we will be able to see the indebtedness of the Sinhalese novelist to Camus:

"avaṭa vūyē pālu bavaki. tadin avva pāyā āti bāvin avāṭa dilisennāk vāni penumak tibunēya. maṭa viḍā gatiyak dānina. dahāḍiya nivena tek maṇḍak viḍā hāriya yutuyayi situnu bāvin mama hevanaka vū galak uḍa hiṇḍagena balā siṭinnāṭa vīmi. ek pāttakin āttē ātaṭa vihidayana kuṁburu yāyaki. anek pāttēn āttē kalāvakī. dola galā yanne mē kālāva māḍini. dola galāvāṭena haṇḍaṭa savan demin siṭi mama

(1) See Women in Love. Chapter.19. (Moony)

siti tānin selaviya nohāktivāk men kammāli kamin yutuva
 siti tānin selaviya nohāktivāk men kammāli kamin yutuva
 siriyaemi. (1)

(The surroundings were deserted. In the blazing sun the atmosphere seemed to be glittering. I felt exhausted. As I felt that I must rest until my body cooled, I sat on a rock in a shade and began to look around. On one side some paddy fields stretched into the far distance. On the other side there was a forest. The stream flows through this forest. Listening to the sound of the stream I felt lazy as if unable to move from where I was sitting.)

"mama śabdaya ena pātta desa parikṣāven bāluvemi. mā siriyaṇvati dākkē vinaḍiyakāṭa pamana pasuvaya. dola nāmī, vanguvak gena, nopenī yana tānaṭa uḍin vū miṭi paṇḍuru kīpayak asala siṭa āya dara kaḍayi." (op.cit. p.128)

(I looked carefully in the direction that I heard the noise. It was after about a minute that I saw Siriyavati. Near a bend of the stream she was collecting firewood by some small shrubs.)

"āya innē galāṭa ehā pāttēya. tava ekama aḍiyakvat idiriyāṭa tābīma mahat anuvana kamak bava maṭa pāhadiliva vāṭahina. ehet yantrānusārayen men magē kakula esavī idiriyāṭa giyēya. ē tīranātmaka sōcanīya piyavara māvisin gannālada bava ekenehima maṭa pratyakṣa viya. mama yantrayak men aḍiyen aḍiya idiriyāṭa giyemi." (op.cit. p.131)

(She was on the other side of the rock. It occurred to me quite clearly that it was a terrible mistake to take one more step forward. But as if by a mechanical power my feet were lifted and moved forward. I knew at once that I had taken that decisive and remorseful step. Step by step I moved forward just like a machine.)

(1) Liyanaracci, Hemaratna. Padadayakugen. Nugegoda 1965.p.124

The following passages are from *L'Etranger* which show Meursault's behaviour, his sensitiveness to the heat of the sun and the atmosphere where he committed the crime of killing the Arab.

"Pendant tout ce temps, il n'y a plus eu que le soleil et ce silence, avec le petit bruit de la source et les trois notes."(1)

"Je marchais lentement vers les rochers et je sentais mon front se gonfler sous le soleil. Toute cette chaleur s'appuyait sur moi et s'opposait à mon avance. Et chaque fois que je sentais son grand souffle chaud sur mon visage, je serrais les dents, je fermais les poings dans les poches de mon pantalon. je me tendais tout entier pour triompher du soleil et de cette ivresse opaque qui'il me déversait."

"Je pensais à la source fraîche derrière le rocher. J'avais envie de retrouver le murmure de son eau, envie de fuir le soleil, l'effort et les pleurs de femme, envie enfin de retrouver l'ombre et son repos. Mais quand j'ai été plus près j'ai vu que le type de Ramond était revenu." (op.cit.p. 84)

"A cause de cette brûlure que je ne pouvais plus supporter j'ai fait un mouvement en avant. Je savais que c'était stupide, que je ne me débarrasserais pas du soleil en me déplaçant d'un pas. Mais j'ai fait un pas, un seul pas en avant." (pp. cit. p.86)

In both the instances the principal characters are about to commit the crimes which are the central incidents of both the novels. They are both, as the reader sees, not criminals,

(1) Camus, Albert. *L'Etranger*. Gallimard. Paris. p.82.

but they are forced by circumstances to commit the respective crimes. From the beginning of the novel we see Meursault as distracted and disinterested in the world around him, but extremely sensitive to the sun and other attractions of nature. The sun is a great force upon him so he goes to the stream to find cool air and shade by it, but not to find the Arab. Camus shows with meticulous detail how the surroundings and the sun pushed Meursault towards the beach, and also from the moment of seeing the Arab how he tried to restrain himself from going up to the stream. We also know that Meursault did not intend to start a fight with the Arab until it really happened.

This part of *L'Etranger* must have been helpful to Liyanaracci in showing the approach of Vijesiri to his crime of raping the girl. His crime too is unpremeditated. The tiredness after school, the heat of the sun and loneliness drag Vijesiri towards the stream and the wood. The quiet, dark and cool wood forces him to walk into it. Instead of the sea in *L'Etranger* here the wood has been used as the setting for the crime. Meursault finds the Arab under a rock by the stream and likewise Vijesiri finds Siriyavati, his victim, behind a rock by the stream. We can see in the above quotations how both the characters were reluctant to move forward and yet are pushed forth and realize at the same time they had taken a stupid and unfortunate step.

The trial at the end of *Padadayakugen* too resembles that in *L'Etranger*, though the mentality and reactions of the two

characters are different. The disinterestedness and humour of Meursault is not seen in Vijesiri. Certain incidents which did not seem to be important at the time they happened become important evidence against both these characters at the trial. As regards these similarities we can assume that Liyanaracci has been largely influenced by Camus.

Liyanaracci writes in clear, powerful, grammatically correct and pleasant language in which we can find an influence of the language of Gunadasa Amarasekara. Especially when his narrators speak emotionally, the language they use remind us of such works of Amarasekara as Yali Upannemi and Depanaladdo. (see Chapter 4) The following passages are a few examples of the influence of Amarasekara on Lyianaracci:

"apē katā baha mē rudu parisarayehi noyek gārahum avaman valaṭa lakvīmaṭa ida āti heyini. apē nimal suvaṇḍa lova ungē gorahāḍi nohobinā vaḍanvalin dāduruva biṇḍa vāṭenu dākīma maṭa ivasāgata hākivanu ādda?" (Pādaḍayakugen.p.30)

(It is because of the possibility of our conversations being subjected to various malicious criticisms in this indecent society. Would it be possible for me to bear to see the destruction and fall of our pure world of fragrance by their mean and obscene words?)

"ē mohotehi ē aṇḍuru lovehi jīvatvūye rasōnmādayen ekaṭa velī unun āṅga masehi rasa sevū apa siruru pamanaki. siruru doragul biṇḍagena piṭavīmaṭa yatna dāru āsāva tula gilunu masita piyavi tatvayaṭa enaviṭa āya haṇḍamin siṭiyāya." (Pādaḍayakugen. p.134)

(It was only the two bodies of us, seeking pleasure in each other's flesh, embracing tightly in extreme desire which existed in that dark world. When my mind was

coming back to its natural state after being submerged in the desire which was trying to free itself by breaking through the doors of my body, she was weeping.)

A long comparison with Amarasekara's language is not necessary to show how much Liyanaracci has been influenced from it. The passages quoted on page of Chapter 4 would be sufficient.

The general narrative in Antima Da is simple, devoid of poetic expressions and fast moving. For example:

"mama pārsal deka gena metek velā pudumayen men ās loku karagena balā siṭi vāḍa kāriyaṭa dunimi. ā eya gattē tamāgē atin siduvū varadaṭa samāva ayadinnāk vāni bāgāpat bālmak mā veta helamini. mama vaṭa piṭa balā asala vū kuṣan puṭuvaka hiṇḍa gattemi. mā puṭuvehi aḍiyak pamana gilā bāssāk men dānina. mā tula ātivūyē apahasu gatiyaki. magē iriyavvehi nuhuru gatiyak dānunu bāvin mama ē mē atata āmbarunemi. Anōmāṭa magē apahasu gatiya penenta ādda? mama dāt daṇḍu puṭu āṇḍi mata raṇḍavā eka vidiyakaṭa vāḍi vīmaṭa tātkalemi. sinahavū namut magē kaṭaṭa vacanayak vat nopiviseyi." (Antima Dā. p.85)

(I handed over the two parcels to the maid who was looking at me with wide open eyes. While taking them from me she cast a timid, apologetic glance at me for her unintentional mistake (of not recognizing me). I sat in a cushion chair after looking around for a while. I felt as if I had sunk about a foot in the chair. It made me uneasy. As I felt uncomfortable in my posture I began to fidget. I wonder if Anoma noticed my uneasy position. Resting my arms on the arms of the chair I tried to steady myself. Then I smiled, but not a single word came out of my mouth.)

This simple style changes into rapid, natural speech of

the villagers in showing the actual feelings of Suvanda in dramatic form:

"mū dānagatte kohomada? peranta paṭan aran sumānayakvat nā. ū kivva vidiyāṭa hāmatānama pabilik velā. āmarējanu-yi kasippuyi dekama tiyana bava mū danne nā. aḍa mānayaḥ nā. Ukkuvā tamayi kiyanna ātte. ū pandan allanne Baduvatte Māṭin Vidāneta nē. Vidānege kasippu jāvāramaṭa pāḍu hinda maṭa kaṭinnayi hadanne...balamuko...mama semen āpasu harunemi." (Antima Da. p.23)

(How on earth has he come to know about this? Hasn't been even one week since I began to brew. As he said, now everybody knows. But he doesn't know that I have both amarejan and kasippu. I'm dead sure. It must be Ukkuva who has told him about this. I know, it is with the Vidane of Baduvatta that he curries favour. He is trying to run me down to save Vidane's kasippu business....Well, let's see'. I slowly turned back.)

"ūṭa vāḍak nāne. api kīyak vat hamba karagattāma ūṭa mokada tiyana rudāva? ū mona ehekaṭada māṭiyata pandan allanne? mama ūṭa kisi vāraddak karala nā. mama uge gē penenṭa paṭan gat tān siṭa amu kunuharupayen baninṭa paṭan gatimi. veri mata nisā hoṇḍa lassana kunuharupa vatura men ibēma kaṭaṭa galā eyi." (Antima Da. p.28)

(It's none of his business. Why does he bother himself when we try to earn something? What makes him curry favour with Martin? I've done no wrong to him? I began to scold him with dirty words when his house became visible. Because of my drunkenness some really dirty words rushed into my mouth.)

Being a country-born author, Liyanaracci is quite familiar with the idiom of the villagers. In the passages above we see how easily he makes use of his knowledge of the natural speech

of the type of characters he is creating, thus revealing their mentality at the same time. In the first passage, the term 'pabilik velā' means something has become known everywhere, by every body; the word 'pabilik' is how the Sinhalese villager pronounces the English word 'public'. Other phrases and words such as 'aḍa mānayaḱ nā' (no doubt), 'pandan allanavā' (to support someone expecting favours in return), 'kaṭinna hadanava' (trying to trap somebody), 'rudāva' (literal meanings pain; but here, one's duty, business), 'amu kunuharupa', (dirty words), 'hoṇḍa lassana kunuharupa' (really (beautiful) dirty, dirty words) etc., show how often and how appropriately Liyanaracci uses the spoken idiom of the villagers to create drama in his novel.

Liyanaracci's language in his second novel is thus less imitative than that in his first novel and more individual and pleasant. In the first one (Padadayakugen) we cannot help feeling that the writer is trying to be inspired by another novelist, obviously Amarasekara. But in this work we do not feel that as the style has become well harmonized with the theme and character.

Eva Ranavira introduces a new form of novel.

Eva Ranavira is the only female novelist who has produced works which place her among the experimentalists of the modern period. Hence she deserves to be discussed in our study. From the beginning of the Sinhalese novel, we have noticed that there has been a scarcity of female authors. When we come to

the last decade we find some female short story writers and novelists such as Punyakanti Wijenayaka.(1), M.M. Swarnalata (Kaṇḍulen Sināven Torava Vālaḷīmi),(1969)(I have buried without tears or laughters) and Karuna Perera, (Aṇḍuraṭa Eliyak, 1971) (A Light for the Dark). Eva Ranavira had already gained popularity as a playwright and a short story writer before publishing her first novel, Layisa (1967).

The structure of Layisa is the first of its type in the Sinhalese novel. Its style is quite different from most other Sinhalese novels as the writer has tried to be independent. The story is about the miseries in the life of Layisa, who is the illegitimate daughter of a poor country woman. Layisa's mother is proud of her daughter as her father was an educated man from a rich family. Her first daughter Helena was illegitimate, but her father was not educated and respectable as Layisa's was. The mother works hard to bring up her two daughters; especially to educate Layisa so that she can rise to respectable society and get a respectable job. Before Layisa's education was finished her mother dies. Helena, the elder sister, is taken as a servant by Hamine, another important character in the novel, and Layisa goes to stay with Mrs. Rajapaksa, a teacher at Layisa's school. Before long Helena becomes pregnant, the man being Hamine's husband. Layisa cultivates a secret love for Mr. Rajapaksa which leads her also to pregnancy. She is immediately sent to the house of Mrs. Rajapaksa's sister and after the birth of the child they adopt it and Layisa is laid (1) Punyakanti writes in English.

off. By this time Helena has had her second child too by the same person.

Now the two sisters live together in the hut where they used to live with their mother and try to be happy, as they have learnt quite a lot about life through their past experiences. After sometime Hamine asks Layisa to become her servant. However much she had determined not to repeat her past mistakes, Layisa is persuaded to go to Hamine's house by poverty. Now the 'respectable' husband of Hamine begins to cast his greedy eye upon Layisa. Her resistance does not last long and she becomes pregnant again.

Even the male servants of this rich family try to tease Layisa. They all believe that Layisa is pining for love and arrange a mock wedding for her in order to receive favours from her. Before the secret of her pregnancy is out Layisa runs away.

This story is not related in the usual narrative nor is it presented through the stream of consciousness of the characters. The structure of this novel is a mixture of general narrative, stream of consciousness and a number of points of view. Every part of the story is related by different characters. At the beginning of the novel, it is the little daughter of Hamine who becomes known to us; we see Cuti's (the little daughter) playful behaviour, and also most of the important characters. Cuti is alone most of the time, as she does not receive proper attention from her parents. So she plays alone and the writer

probes into her mind with a subtle understanding. After Cuti introduces the dramatic incident of Layisa leaving her house one evening, Aranolis begins to talk, and tells how he saw the drama at Hamine's house, how Hamine treated her servants and how he, despite his being a poor man himself, tried to deceive Layisa and had improper favours from her sister. Helena is the narrator after Aranolis. She is innocent and angry, believing the poor are always illtreated and wronged by the rich, and proud about Layisa, her sister, because she has got some education. Rosalin, the best friend of Layisa, is the next narrator, who is both happy and annoyed at the same time. She is happy as she has a lover with whom she was planning to run away on the night that Layisa came to her house. Now Rosalind is annoyed with Layisa as she thinks that her arrival there might disturb her plans.

In the second part we hear Layisa, the heroine, giving her version of the story. She does not contradict the previous narrators. But we see the happenings in her life in greater detail. She speaks in a way implying that the circumstances which led her to misery are not the fault of those who are concerned, but the result of economic and social conditions. It is not only the well-to-do educated who suffer from depression and loneliness, but the poor too. It is the eternal human tragedy that exists all over the world that these characters represent. Every one of them suffers from frustration in their own ways.

The characters created by Eva seem to be quite natural

against the rural background and a fragrance of Sinhaleseness in them has been achieved through their speech. In selecting this particular technique for her novel *Eva* has apparently had influence from William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*. In Faulkner's masterpiece the theme is the death and burial of Addie Bundren. The narrative flows not in a conventional form but as successive episodes recounted by various members of the family and a few friends. The husband of Addie has promised to take her to Jefferson, after her death, to bury her among her own people. When the death occurs, the weather turns to be unfavourable for the journey and the neighbours ask them to bury her near where they lived. But Anse, the husband, would not break his word of honour to his wife, and set off with his sons and daughter taking the corpse in a cart. From the very start of the journey they face a number of unfortunate obstacles and dangers. They are not discouraged by any of these and take Addie to Jefferson. By the time they have accomplished their task they have lost their property and the second son who was the most sensible at the beginning has gone crazy and is sent to an asylum.

This story is presented in *As I Lay Dying* in successive episodes from the point of view of various characters in the story so as to reveal their desires, fears and rivalries by using their natural speech. This is the vernacular speech of the south of the United States. Faulkner uses the vernacular speech with such ease and sense of appropriateness that it helps us to gain a deep and wide understanding of the life of these

people. The simplicity and naivety of these American country people and their way of thinking is similar to those of the Sinhalese country folks in many ways. This similarity may have, probably, inspired Eva to write a novel like 'Layisa'. The plots are different as we have seen in the synopses given above. But the structures of the two novels are quite similar and so is the setting, use of language and the mentality of the characters.

In the first episode of Layisa, it is a little girl who is presented to us and who recounts some important parts of the story. To suit this character Eva uses a style based on the speech of children. The vocabulary is not always that of children. But she catches the rhythm of the talk of children skilfully:

2 "amma bēt dānava. tuvālavaḷaṭa bēt dānava. piccicca tuvā-
lavalāṭa nilpāṭa bēt dānava. tīnta gāva vagē tamayi. ara
diga bēt peṭṭiya aran ṭikak mirikalā gānna poḍi duvage
tuvāle. poḍi duva kā gahanne nā. sanīpeṭa innavā. hoṇḍa
poḍi duva. hoṇḍa lamayaṭa alut potak denava. assayo inna
ballo inna potak denava. pota iranane nātuva balanna poḍi
duva. hoṇḍaṭa kiyavanda. pota iruve nātnam vena pot dena-
vā. huṅgak pot dunna hama iskōle giya hāki. poḍi duvaṭa
pot dānna bāg ekak denavā. "(1)

(Mother applies some medicine. She puts some medicine on
wounds. She puts blue medicine on burns. Just like apply-
ing ink. Take that long tube of medicine, squeeze it a
little and put on the wound of the little daughter. Little

(1) Ranavira, Eva. Layisa. Gampaha. 1967. p.19

daughter doesn't cry. She is comfortable. Nice little daughter. I'll give a book to my nice child. Yes, I'll give you a book with horses and dogs in it. Don't tear the book my little daughter. You must read well. If you don't tear this I'll give you some more books. When I give you a lot of books you can go to school. I'll give a bag to my little daughter to carry books.)

The tone of this speech is that of a mother speaking to her little daughter. But the speaker here, in fact, is little Cuti to her doll which she calls 'my little daughter'. As children are naturally great imitators Cuti talks to her doll as her mother would. However, natural this language is, when we read some pages from the beginning we feel that the whole story is going to be in the same style and we begin to wonder whether the whole story is about a child. But in the next episode when Aranolis begins to give his account this doubt disappears as the story changes into the experiences of adults and more serious problems. For example:

"Lāyisa hamba velā maṭa ahaṇḍa hitayi mokada pānala giyē kiyala. mokak hari kāranayak tiyeṇḍa epāyā. pissi unat mokak hari kāranayak tiyeṇḍa epāya. amuma amu pissi tamayi. ara piduru maḍuvaṭa velā budiyagena innavā. ōna vela-vaka vāḍa ivara vunahama piduru maḍuve. ā Ākman, uṃbaṭa hoṇḍa nāḍḍa ēki? ara nāmbiṭa vāḍiya kohomat hoṇḍayi. uyanda puluvan. uṃbaṭa uyala kaṇḍa deyī. gedara dora balā ganiyi. rūpen varadak nā. Helēnāṭa vāḍiya mūna hoṇḍayi. hābāyi Helena paraddanna bā āṅgen paten." (Layisa. p.75)

(I feel like meeting Layisa and asking her why she ran away. There must be some reason. Although she is crazy there must be a reason. She is a real mad one. Just

lies in that hay stack. Whenever she is free she goes to the hay stack. Hey, Ackman, don't you fancy her? Anyway, she is better than that cow. She can cook. She'll cook for you. She'll keep house for you. Her appearance is reasonable. Her face is better than Helena's. But she can't beat Helena in her body.)

Aranolis, the speaker here, is the one who arranged a mock wedding for Layisa and laughed at her from behind. Now he is worried about her and thinks of finding out the reason for her runningaway. Ackman is another servant of Hamine. He keeps one of their estates, but he is not cunning like Aranolis. Helena is Layisa's sister with whom Aranolis used to have some fun. The language is a mixture of the interior monologue of Aranolis and his actual dialogue with Ackman. The usual written style is not interspersed here. Also the dialogue is always one sided. The person who is spoken to never replies, while the speaker continues his part of the dialogue. This method does not obstruct the flow of the story; we do not feel we miss part of the dialogue as we find it in subsequent parts of the story, when the other characters speak. Faulkner too has used a similar style though he occasionally includes the speech of other characters with that of the current narrator. For example:

"We are too high up, ' Cash says. Vernon is shouting too, but we cannot make out what he is saying for the noise of the water. It runs steady and deep now, unbroken, without sense of motion until a log ; comes along, turning slowly. 'Watch it, ' Cash says. We watch it and see it falter and hang for a moment, the current building up

behind it in a thick wave, submerging it for an instant before it shoots up and tumbles on.

'There it is,' I say.

'Ay,' Cash says. 'It is there'. We look at Vernon again. He is now flapping his arms up and down..We move on downstream, slowly and carefully, watching Vernon. He drops his hands. 'This is the place', Cash says.

'Well, goddamn it, let's get across, then,' Jewel says. He moves the horse on."(1)

Faulkner uses this method of including dialogue to preserve the drama of situations. The narrator of the above passage is Darl, the brother who goes crazy at the end. Here the brothers are trying to get the cart with the corpse of their mother across the river, where they encounter the worst misfortune of the journey. In Layisa, the writer has not followed this method of using the full dialogue. Her style is similar to the one seen in the following passage:

"Jewel dives again. We stand there, leaning back against the current, watching the water where he disappeared, holding the dead rope between us like two men holding the nozzle of a fire-hose, waiting for water . 'You make him come back,' she says. 'Jewel!', she says. He comes up again, tossing his hair back from his eyes. He is swimming now, towards the bank, the current sweeping him downstream quartering. 'you Jewel!' Dewey Dell says. We stand holding the rope and see him gain the bank and climb out. As he rises from the water, he stoops and Picks up something. He comes back along the bank.....')
(As I Lay Dying. p.127)

(1) Faulkner, William. As I Lay Dying. Penguin. 1972.p.114

Eva's style too is simple and fast moving like this. Consider how she expresses her feelings about the life of the uneducated, poor country people in the following passage:

"uṃbat dannāva katāva kohoma unat Helēnā akkā kisi bayak nātuva taniyama innavā. maṭat ōnā anna ehema inna puluvan davasak hoyāgaṇḍa. tanikama āraganḍane api pavul venne. nātnan taniyama innavā. man nan tanikama āraganḍa neme Lāyiso, maṭa viśāla ādarayak hitaṭa enava. itin ēkat tanikamak vagē tamayi. nātnan taniyama inna bāriya pānala duvannē nātuva. uṃbaṭat oya tanikama tiyena bava maṭa hoṇḍaṭa tērenava. uṃba hāndāvaṭa piyaru gālā bulat viṭak hapa hapā innavā dākala magē āhaṭa kaṇḍulu āva. nikan uṃbē tanikama maṭat gāhuva vagē dānuna. ēka kiyandā bāri deyak, maṭa ē velāve dānune. mama uṃbaṭa hinā venava nemē"

(Layisa. p.101)

(You too know it, however she talks, sister Helena lives alone without any fear. I am also waiting for a day to live like that. Is'nt it to cure our loneliness we want to get married? Otherwise we could live alone. But, Layisa, it's different in my case, it's not because of loneliness, but there's a great love in my heart. That's also a kind of loneliness. That's why I can't live alone and want to run away. I know that you too suffer from this loneliness. When I saw you with powdered face, waiting in the parlour, chewing some betle, tears rushed to my eyes. I felt as if your loneliness came over to me. How I felt at that time is difficult to express in words. Don't think that I laugh at you.)

This is Rosalind talking to Layisa. The former is happy because she has a lover with whom she was planning to elope. Through this speech we find common human desires and feelings being expressed in a moving way. It is not only characters

from the upper and elite circles of society but these villagers too who suffer from lack of love and solitude. Sinhalese novelists, for some time, used to depict villagers as always busy with more materialistic problems. Through the characters in Layisa, Eva exposes their spiritual and emotional life too.

In the above passage, through Rosalind's words we hear something about all the important female characters in the novel i.e. Helena, Rosalind and Layisa, with regard to their emotional problems. Helena is healthy and lonely, but now she is unaware of her loneliness as she is always busy with her two children. Rosalind was once lonely and was needing to get married, but now she thinks it is more because of overflowing love in her mind than from loneliness that she wished to elope with her lover. Unlike a sophisticated girl she does not think of the possible after-effects of her decision. Now her only worry is Layisa's problem. Rosalind sympathises with Layisa, and how deeply she was concerned about her is shown when she says that her eyes filled with tears on seeing Layisa waiting in her desperate loneliness.

The passages quoted above and the richness of expressive power seen in the style show that Eva Ranavira's attempt has been to create a novel without using the general narrative style of the day and the general characteristics of the written Sinhalese. We have seen that most other Sinhalese novelists too have used the idiom of the spoken language, in dialogue and in presenting stream of consciousness. But this writer uses the

speech of the characters throughout the whole novel. She has taken great pains to avoid mixing Sanskrit words except a few such as 'āḍara', (love), 'praśna' (questions) which are not unnatural even in the speech of uneducated villagers. When Layisa begins to talk in the last part of the novel, the style is slightly changed as she is more educated than any of the other narrators:

"Rājapakṣa nōnā mahattayā tama kuḍā lōke jīvat vunā. mama magē kuḍā lōke jīvat vunā. ā iskōle pot lakunu kirīmat, nidā gānīmat, keṇḍirigāmat iskōle yāmat kalā. mama tē haḍā, bat uyā, bat mālu pārsal kara, lamayi nāva kavā prīti vunā. Rājapakṣa nōna mahattayāge sampūrna lōkaya mama dāna hiṭiya. ā magē lōkaya dāna hiṭiye nā. itin magē lōkaya Rājapakṣa nōna mahattayāge lōkayaṭa vaḍā gāṭalu āti ekak vunā. maṭa visāla rahasak saṅgavāgena jīvat vīmaṭa siduvunā. āṭa esē kisivak tibunē nā. samaharaviṭa mama āta mē gānat īrisiyā kalā." (Lāyisā. p.127)

(Mrs. Rajapaksa lived in her small world. I lived in my small world. What she did was, marking the school exercise books, sleeping, moaning and going to school. Meanwhile, I cooked rice, made tea, made parcels of rice and curry, washed, fed and put to bed the children and enjoyed it. I knew the whole world of Mrs. Rajapaksa. But she did not know my world. And that made my world more problematic than that of Mrs. Rajapaksa. I had to live while trying to hide a great secret. She did not have any such problem. I, therefore, envied her about this.)

This style is obviously slightly more elevated than the style of the other parts of this novel. Layisa uses more figurative words than any of the other narrators. Even in this passage, we find such terms as 'kudalokaya' (small world),

'mama ägē sampūrna lōkaya dāna siṭiya'(I knew all her world) 'gāṭalu äti'(problematic) etc., which add some poetry to Layisa's words. Layisa's world and great secret is her love for Mr. Rajapaksa of which Mrs. Rajapaksa did not know any thing. In this part of the novel the pleasure, tension, fear and jealousy of Layisa resulting from this secret love is presented in a highly striking and sensitive style. Thus we can see that Eva Ranavira has developed a suitable style for her novel, which is independent and which marks a successful stage in the experimental period of the Sinhalese novel.

Tenneson Perera:An angry young novelist.

Tenneson Perera is one of the most controversial writers among the experimental young novelists of the modern period. Although he has published works of fiction since 1960, (Duk Gindarak Madin,1960),(Through a Fire of Misery), Viplavaya, 1963,(The Revolution), Pahan Kanda Mula Añdura,1964,(Dark at the Foot of the Lamp Post), he was not recognized as a writer of talent and seriousness until the appearance of the collection of short stories, Däti Rōden Upan Budun,(1976)(The Buddha Born from a Cog Wheel). This work was immediately subjected to severe criticism by certain groups of society who were bitterly hurt by Perera's attacks and as a result of their protests, it was banned by the government. But most serious readers of fiction had time to secure copies of this work and they recognized Perera as a young writer of ambition to experiment and an angry man about corruption and various other rackets of politics.

clergy and society in general. He is especially familiar with the life and problems of the working class in Colombo and the poor living in slums. In writing about the life of this long neglected community, Perera has used their natural speech and slang words. This was criticized even by some leading novelists who condemned it as 'pidgin language.'

Perera has not been discouraged by what happened to his work nor by other criticisms, but he has followed the same method of social criticism using the same kind of language in his next work, *Duttha Gamini Nomala Vagayi* (*Duttha Gamini* is still alive). This piece of farcical writing satirizes the hypocritical life of some religious and political leaders, though its principal character is an ordinary clerk. Although some other novelists have criticised corruption in various social and religious institutions none of them have done it as severely and openly as Perera. Some early novelists such as Piyadasa Sirisena and W.A. Silva have criticized these institutions with the intentions of real nationalists, but not as real artists. Tenneson Perera has not allowed the artistic beauty of his work to be covered with social criticism. His characters are down-to-earth in their manners and speech.

The plot of *Dutṭha Gāmini Nomala Vagayi* (*Dutṭha Gāmini* is still alive) is centred upon the life of *Diyasena*, a timid, ordinary clerk in Colombo. At the beginning we see him suffering from poverty, contriving to make ends meet by satisfying money lenders and fighting with natural desires. He cannot get

married and live a normal life because of his insufficient salary and mounting debts. To satisfy his sexual desires he can go to a brothel, but he is scared of it because of the various stories he had heard about venereal diseases.

After some time he begins an affair with Miss Nahena, a new clerk at his office, who pays all his debts from her savings. Soon afterwards Diyasena gets married to Miss Nahena only to be happy for a very short period. On the very first night he finds that she was not a virgin; but forgives her thinking of his own past; and a few days later learns that she was having a doubtful relationship with Sraddhasena who claims to be the president of All-Ceylon Buddhist Association. When questioned by Diyasena, Nahena says she was only helping Sraddhasena in his religious activities. Diyasena fails to interfere effectively in this affair as Sraddhasena is a powerful person in all social, religious and political circles.

Meanwhile, Nahena has a child, who suffers from hereditary venereal disease and dies soon afterwards. Nahena doubts that Diyasena must have been suffering from it and Diyasena complains that she must have had it. Sraddhasena organizes a great pageant to represent the great procession of victory of the King Dutthagamani. The external aims of this pageant are shown as religious and cultural, but when Sraddhasena organizes it we find that his purpose is to support the governing party. By this time Diyasena too is a member on the working committee of Sraddhasena's Buddhist association and being forced and compelled with money and liquor, Diyasena helps Sraddhasena though

he was not even sure whether he was a Buddhist or not.

To represent the great national hero, Dutthagamini, Sraddhasena dresses himself up as the king. Now they need a Viharamaha Devi for whom they hire the Miss Ceylon of that year. The royal procession would not be complete without the ten great warriors of Dutthagamini, and to represent them Sraddhasena hires some thugs, pimps and tramps from the underground. A figure of the royal elephant, Kadol, is made in a special way to be able to carry bottles of kasippu, hand bombs etc., in its belly. At last, every thing is complete to the satisfaction of Sraddhasena and the press gives all possible publicity for this 'religious and cultural' pageant.

The great pageant arrives in Anuradhapura with much rejoicing and success on the scheduled day. The leaders and organizers get together at the rest house to celebrate their victory where Sraddhasena treats his supporters lavishly with liquor. As the power of alcohol begins to work on him, Sraddhasena falls asleep in the chair and dreams himself to be the real king Dutthagamini and as trying to capture a Naga queen who had come to worship the great Dagoba in Anuradhapura. He wakes up soon after this and failing to realize that he had been only dreaming he takes Nahena as the Naga Queen and tries to embrace her. Diyasena and others interfere but Sraddhasena fights with them and drags Nahena into a room. When this happens we take Sraddhasena as insane, but in the next part of the story, instead of him, we find Diyasena insane. This is the

last part of the story in which, in the course of a trial against Diyasena, we are told that he has killed Nahena and their two children with a pistol. Sraddhasena gives evidence against Diyasena.

At the time of committing these multiple murders, we are told that Diyasena had been identifying himself with king Elara, the rival of Dutthagamini. At the incident at the rest house, when Sraddhasena took himself to be the real Dutthagamini, he challenged Diyasena to a fight, calling him Elara. Thus the story is related to these historical names at various points for the sake of satire and humour. Even the names of the two male characters are of historical and cultural significance and are used ironically. Diyasena is the name given in legend to a king who was supposed to appear in the year 2500 of the Buddhist calendar, with great powers to unite Ceylon and restore Buddhism into its early purity.(1) When the Buddhists of Ceylon celebrated the 2500th anniversary of Buddhism in 1956, some Buddhists really expected that this hero would appear to purify Buddhism and to save their country. Probably, Tenneson Perera must have thought of these implications around the name Diyasena, when he gave it to his hero. His Diyasena is the opposite of the legendary Diyasena. He does not believe in religion because he has many other important things in his life to worry about. His life is not complete, endless problems make him even forget about himself and the reader finds that he is the representative of thousands of

(1) See Pārakumbā Sirita, verse No.116. ed. D.G. Abhayagunaratna. Colombo. 1922.

such people who suffer from various economic and social problems as results of the defects of the existing social, political and economic patterns.

The name Śraddhāsena, too is ironical, though it is not legendary. This name means the person of faith, the pious one; to become the president of the Buddhist association, this seems to be a quite suitable name. But Sraddhasena's real behaviour proves that he is far from being faithful either to religion or to his friends. Under cover of his name and religion he commits every imaginable kind of misdeed.

The techniques of relating this story are quite new in the Sinhalese novel. Sudden breakings into stream of consciousness, drama, visual figures and ordinary narrative etc., have been used with considerable skill to suit the theme. Tenneson Perera has been quite brave and open in his social criticisms and references to sex.

In the language of modern Sinhalese fiction, a special place should be given to the language of this novel. The imitation of the natural speech of the type of characters depicted in the novel is the main method of Tenneson Perera, but this, nevertheless, is not something new in the Sinhalese novel; from the earliest days several authors have tried to use the real speech of their characters. What is most significant in this writer's language is the brave and genuine approach to the subject-matter and the author's uninhibitedness. It also shows the latest stage of the language of Sinhalese fiction,

admirable flexibility, fine sensitivity and capability of expressing the complicated problems and experiences of modern man.

For example, we can consider the following passages in which we can listen to the interior monologue of Diyasena:

"mama kohomada meccara naya vunē. naya vunē gānu passe gihillada? sūdu kelalāda- ammaṭa tāttāta salakalada? leḍa dukaṭa viyadam karalada? mē siyallaṭama salli yaṇṭa āti. salli noyana deyak tavat ādda? kōkaṭat salli. salli nātuva bā malli."(1)

(How is it that I have borrowed so much money? Was it to spend on women- to gamble- or to keep my parents- or on medicine? I've borrowed for all these. Yes, it's possible, I must have spent money on all these. There's nothing that you can do without money. O brother, it's impossible to survive without money.)

"-'Shylock- if you do not repay me I shall take a pound of your flesh, to be cut from any part of your body that I choose-cut from breast-breast-' naya nodunnot kakul kaḍanavā. panaṭa ādarēnam payin yanna epākāmara kulī āriyas māsa pahaka kohoma hari ēka gevala dānna-(dayābara karunābara misihāmine obē haḍavata kotaram molokda? obē haḍavata sipa ganna iḍa danna) apē mitra kama mēkenma kelavara veyi. mama hituve nāhā miṣṭa Diyasēna mē vage minihek kiyala.tāttā gen ayitivuna ekama mudda ugas kaḍe-tava dasas gānakin ugasa sinna venava- mātiyā korānna dēk nā, api rimayindal evvā. veri cori cori cori."

(op.cit. p.11)

"Shylock if you do not repay me I shall take a pound of your flesh, to be cut from any part of your body that I

(1) Perera, Tenneson. Duṭṭha Gāmini Nomala Vagayi. Colombo.1969 p.10.

choose-cut from breast-breast. I'll break your legs if you don't pay the loan. If you have any love for your life don't walk- You haven't paid room rent for five months, try to pay it somehow. (Dear, kind Misi Hamine, your heart is so tender, let me kiss your heart.) This may be the end of our friendship. Mr. Diyasena, I had never imagined that you are such a person. The only ring I inherited from my father is at the pawn broker's. Time to save it will soon be over. Now, we can't help sir, we have sent you reminders. very sorry. very sorry, sorry)

In these passages the stream of consciousness of Diyasena shows his private world of problems created by extreme poverty. He has been working for years on end, and yet he cannot even get rid of his debts. He has applied for increments and treasury loans which have been refused due to his having taken too many leaves. He cannot imagine the reason why he has to suffer so much from financial difficulties though he has always been careful about his expenditure. In the second passage, at the beginning, some lines from the Merchant of Venice come into Diyasena's mind, and when he thinks of the local Shylocks, who flock around him on pay-day these lines from the Shakespeare play rush into his consciousness. He remembers immediately after this about his room rent, the landlady whom he calls Missi Hamine. When he says 'O Missi Hamine, how tender your heart is,' we find that he is only being ironical. Room rent is not the last problem, there is the pawn broker, from whom he has to get back the only ring he inherited from his father. The last line is supposed to be heard from the Tamil pawn broker. Thus by means of carefully used language, Perera

presents a large and important part of the life of Diyasena.

Throughout the whole work there is a sarcastic criticism of the existing political system which is shown as the main cause of the sufferings of the common people. For example:

"apē tātta U.N.P. araṭuvak. ammā tāttage valige. putā mokak hari niv wēv. kanda nā, bonḍa nā. indā nā, mokakda pakṣaya. U.N.P. mokakda pakṣaya. Śrī Lankā. apaṭa ōna Sirima nōna. apaṭa ōna Dudley Hāmu. hāmu. hāmu. hāmu. hāma pāṭtaṭama hāmu. dhanavādayen nirdhana vādayaṭa. nirdhana vādayen dhanavādayaṭa. hāmu bā. Don nam Don. Siman nam Siman. Don Siman dekek bā." (op.cit. p.13)

(Our father is a fervant U.N.P. supporter. And mother is his shadow. But the son is in one of the new waves. Nothing to eat. Nothing to drink. No house to live in. What's your party? U.N.P. What's your party? Sri Lanka. We want honourable Srma. We want honourable Dudley. Honourable. Honourable. Honourable. There is a 'hamu' (an honourable) in every party. From capitalism to socialism. From socialism to capitalism. What's this 'hamu' (mixing or honourable). If it's Don, let it be Don. If it is Simon, let it be so. Can't be both Don and Simon.)

It is quite obvious that the author expresses his bitter disappointment with the present party political system in Ceylon. But he does not digress from the dramatic presentation of character in order to include these political ideas. They are only spontaneous reflections in the consciousness of Diyasena. He is not easily persuaded by the other fellow clerks in his office to join their political party as he believes that politics would not help solve his personal problems. In a previous passage quoted from this novel we saw the phrase

'Salli natuva ba malli' (Cannot do anything without money, brother.). And in this passage a similar kind of saying is seen: 'don siman dekek ba' (Can't be both Don and Simon.). The frequent use of this kind of sayings from the colloquial speech of Colombo is characteristic in the style of Tenneson Perera.

Frank and direct mention of sex is another characteristic on Perera's language. The following passages can be regarded as examples:

"Diyasēna Wilmat nāti velāvaṭa ohugē saṅgarā goḍen ekak dekek gena balayi. mē mis Nāhena. mūna ē vagēmāyi. keṭṭut nā mahatat nā. nagna sirura mē vagē āti. ohuge sirura kitikāvi pibidennāk men Diyasēnaṭa dāne. uḍa bāli ataṭa perali depā vihidā hala ruvak Diyasēna daki. Diyasēnaṭa tamā haṇḍunana gānikāvak matak vē. ē siyalla amataka kala yutuya. ispiritāle pahē vāṭṭuva. pōlime inne Diyasēna nēda? injekṣan silinjare aṅgal hayak digayi." (op.cit. pp.19/20)

(When Wilmot is gone out of the room, Diyasena takes one or two from his pile of magazines and looks at them. This one is Miss Nahena. Face is just like hers. Neither lean nor fat. Her naked body must be just like this one. Diyasena feels that his body was awakening and being aroused. He begins to see a figure, lying on back, with legs stretched apart. It reminds him of a prostitute of his acquaintance. It is better to forget all this. Ward No.5 of the hospital. Isn't that Diyasena who is in the queue? The injection sryinge is six inches long....)

"dhanapatiyanta mehi atulvima tahanam-meya padadayintāyi-enta mahattaya me enakam tamāyi balan inne-me sundara vasa bhavana- buru ande ekama sarana- suda api buru ande sudi karamu. polisiya red kalot me mage gal frend labana sumane honi mun yanta purudu venava. O yes, I believe! habayi matat ona hit ekak."

(Entrance prohibited to the rich-this place is for vagrants. Come in Sir. I am waiting for you. this beautiful mansion. this camp bed, our only refuge- darling, let us make fun on the camp bed. In case of a police raid, you must say this is my girl friend. Now we are practicing for our honey moon, next week. O yes, I believe. But I too must have a go.)

There are some other passages in this novel which would seem quite obscene if they are extracted from the context. One reason for this is that for a long time Sinhalese writers had not been used to refer to sex and sexual behaviour of men and women as directly and openly as this. Although the spoken language is rich in a vocabulary to express any thing about sex, such words are used only among very close friends and in quarelling. In literature the usual way to speak about sex is to use a special, sophisticated vocabulary. In the novels of Amarasekara and Jayatilaka, as we have seen, they have used this poetic vocabulary and new words and terms were invented by them according to conventional vocabulary, though they deal with sex quite often in their works. Tenneson Perera seems to have understood this difficulty of the previous writers and has started to use the actual words regarding sex, though within a limit so as not to embarass the conventionally moral reader.

Some times Perera uses extracts from classical prose works. On p.32 we find that Diyasena remembers a description from Dharmapradipika, (Kiyaga sondura mahabamba tema sandin somi gena...) when he thinks of the beauty of his fiancée, Miss Nahena. And again, on his first night after marrying

Nahena, he remembers some sayings from Kamasutra and Piruvana Pot Vahanse. (p.34) Perera must have thought to use this device of using extracts from classical works in order to avoid making long, embarrassing descriptions of sex and to save his style being monotonous.

On some occasions Perera disregards even the common rules of the grammar of the written language:

"Nāhēnat Diyasēnat jōḍu dā rākiyāvaṭa yayi-gedarin bat mulak uyāgena gihin dennā samasē bedā kayi."

(op.cit. p.35)

(Nahena and Diyasena go to work together. And take a packet of rice with them and share it equally.)

But this kind of grammatical mistake and a general narrative style which sometimes resembles that of the other novelists of this time are not the really significant features in the language of Perera, as he employs a number of techniques in his style; for instance we can examine the page 54. This page is divided into two columns, under two titles, i.e. The room where Sraddhasena is, and the room where Diyasena is. Under the first title there are a few phrases from the conversation of Sraddhasena and Nahena, who are committing adultery while Diyasena is asleep in the next room. The penultimate sentence indicates the climax and abatement of their sexual pleasure. The last line consists of a succession of the word 'suda'. Under the second title (opposite the description of Sraddhasena's and Nahena's room) there is a black oblong figure under which this description is given in small types:

'Diyasena's subconsciousness. Na. Sraddhasena. Venereal diseases. she gets no sexual pleasure from me. I'm impotent. (bā, bā, bā,) can't can't can't. just like a she goat. continue to breed. Sraddhasena. Na. God bless you.'

These techniques help a great deal to dramatize the action of the novel and avoid long descriptions. The attempt of the novelist has been to develop an independent style of novelty while helping the reader to create visual images. His fondness for presenting some incidents as short plays, e.g. Sraddhasena's birthday party, and the incident in the rest house, may be mentioned as similar instances.

+++++

C o n c l u s i o n

In the present study of the language of Sinhalese fiction, an attempt has been made to present a comprehensive picture of the long history of Sinhalese prose. This brief survey is intended to help understand the nature and the problems of language of Sinhalese fiction writers from the late nineteenth century onwards. The Buddhist as well as the Christian writers at this time were still admiring the classical styles of ancient Sinhalese prose writers who paid more attention to develop elevated styles on the basis of the conventional grammar and less attention to the current idiom and speech. At the turn of the nineteenth century the Sinhalese language was being used for various purposes and was changing through a number of religious, national, educational and literary movements, resulting in the expansion of its vocabulary and the power of expression. It is after this time that we see the first signs of the every day speech and colloquial Sinhalese beginning to be used in writing, on a very small scale of course, for which the scholarly writers had a peculiar dislike for a long time.

When Sinhalese writers began to produce fiction after the models of Western literature in the 20th century, despite their poor knowledge of the literary aspects of modern fiction, they were keenly interested in the importance of

the role of language in their new art form. But it took a long time for them to cease being dependent on classical prose and to concentrate on developing new styles according to the requirements of the novel. Although some major novelists after the '20s have contributed a great deal to popularize the novel in Sinhalese society it was the novelists of the '50s who first produced a few interesting novels of world standards dealing with problems, experiences and sensibility of the modern times. They understood that the change of subject matter and of the form of the novel should essentially change the language as well.

The realistic novel requires the use of realistic language. The Sinhalese novelists after 1950 were aware of this fact which made them use spoken Sinhalese as well as a large number of new terms and words while writing about the new life in a new era. Newly emerging writers from various regions and social strata endeavour to develop individual styles, causing further development of the language of Sinhalese fiction.

In the language of modern Sinhalese fiction a perpetual aspect is the influence of the classical Sinhalese prose despite its often being fed with new terms, speech of different regions, slang words of the city, cliches, jargons and various other features of the current speech. Some Sinhalese novelists after the '40s whose work is discussed in this study have greatly benefitted by their knowledge of world

literature and especially the new trends in the novel. As a result they have created most of the new types of the novel in Sinhalese too, such as the family chronicle, family romance, romantic love story, the historical novel, crime and detective fiction, the psychological novel, the stream of consciousness novel, the lyrical novel, the new novel (nouveau roman) etc.

While the major novelists who gained popularity after the '50s and some of the young experimentalists of the '60s still nurture a great respect for the 'written Sinhalese' or the literary Sinhalese governed by the traditional grammar, there are a few young writers who try to liberate themselves from these barriers to develop free and independent styles.

Thus the language of Sinhalese fiction from the late nineteenth century and up to date has undergone various experiments and has now reached such a stage that the novelist of the present times can concentrate more on the other aspects of the novel because he will no longer find the language a problem or a barrier to express the sensibility of today and to write about the complicated human problems of our times.

+++++

Bibliography

Theses and Dissertations:

(All submitted to University of London.)

1. Aldis, G. Imagery and Symbolism in Some Novels published between 1847 and 1857. (M.A. 1961)
2. Berry, R.T. Language and Thought in Webster's Plays. (Ph.D. 1963)
3. Brink, A.W. A Study in the Literature of Inward Experience. 1600-1700 (Ph.D. 1962)
4. Cardwell, H.B. The Sociological Novel in England, 1830-60, with special reference to the relation between didactic intention and literary form. (Ph.D. 1962)
5. Chilton, Annie. The Colloquial Movement in English Prose from 1660 to 1704. (M.A. 1948)
6. Cromes, V.W. The Development of Henry James's 'science' method in the novels and stories after 1895: a study of a dramatic genius which could not be expressed on the stage and its realization in prose fiction. (M.A. 1963)
7. De Mel, S.M. i: A Literary study of Saddharmaratnavaliya. (M. Phil. 1970)
ii: A Survey of minor Jataka poetry in Sinhalese literature, with special reference to the Neville Catalogue of Sinhalese manuscripts in the British Museum. (Ph. D. 1972)
8. Donaldson, H.L. Opinions of the English Language as a medium of literary expression. 1660-1714. (M.A. 1960)
9. Hancock, F.B. The Development of Symbols in D.H. Lawrence's The Rainbow and Women in Love. (M.A. 1962)
10. Hodge, Sheila. An Analysis of Dramatic Speech in English literature before 1550. (M.A. 1948)

11. Honan, L.H.P. A Study of Robert Browning's technique in the treatment of Character in the dramatic movement. (Ph.D. 1966)
12. Khayal, A.H. A study of the Prose Style of John Stuart Mill. (Ph.D. 1966)
13. Kirschner, P. A study of the Conrad's use of the principles of dramatic technique and construction in his fiction, with a comment on his three plays. (M.A. 1956)
14. Oldfield, D.E. The Prose Style of Middlemarch. (M.A. 1963)
15. Peake, C.H. Jonathan Swift as a Critic of Literature and Language. (M.A. 1964)
16. Stoneman, P.H. A study of George Eliot's method of presenting characters from Scenes of Clerical Life to Romola with special reference to linguistic aspects of the techniques. (M.A. 1964)
17. Wilson, J.M. The Nature and function^{of} dialogue in the short stories of Henry James. (M.A. 1965)
18. Wilson, V.M.W. Aspects of Dickens's use of conversational in the novel. (M.A. 1955)

Works of Literary Criticism and History (English):

1. Allen, Walter. The English Novel. (Penguin edition. 1958)
2. Allot, Mirian. Novelists on the Novel. London 1965 ed.
3. Baring, Maurice. Landmarks in Russian Literature. London. 1960.
4. Bergonzi, Bernard. Sphere History of Literature in the English Language. Vol. 7. The Twentieth Century. London. 1970.
5. " " The Situation of the Novel. London. 1970
6. Bergum, Edwin, B. The Novel and the World's Dilemma. New York. 1963.
7. Booth, Wayne, C. The Rhetoric of Fiction. The University of Chicago. 1961.

8. Bridgeman, R. The Colloquial Style in America.
New York. 1966.
9. Calderwood, James, L. &
Toliver, Harold E. Perspectives on Fiction. Oxford Univer-
sity Press. 1968.
10. Coe, R. N. Beckett. Edinburgh. 1964
11. Crane, R. S. The Language of Criticism and the Struc-
ture of Poetry. Toronto. 1953.
12. " " Critical and Historical Principles of
Literary History. Chicago. 1971.
13. Daiches, David. The Novel and the Modern World. Chicago.
1960.
14. Dipple, Elizabeth. Plot. (The Critical Idiom). London. 1970
15. Eliot, T. S. What is a Classic? London 1945
16. Forster, E. M. Aspects of the Novel. London. 1927
17. Gass, William, H. Fiction and the Figures of Life. N.Y. 1970
18. Grabo, Carl, H. The Technique of the Novel. N.Y. 1965
19. Grillet, Robbe. Snapshots and Towards a New Novel.
London. 1965.
20. Gross, John. Joyce. Fontana. 1971.
21. Hildick, Wallace. 13 Types of Narratives. London. 1970
22. Hough, Graham. Style and Stylistics. London. 1969
23. " " An Essay on Criticism. London. 1966
24. Humphry, Robert. Stream of Consciousness in the Modern
Novel. University of California Press. 1968
25. King, Adele. Proust. Edinburgh. 1968
26. Leavis, F. R. The Great Tradition. London. 1948
27. Liddlel, Robert. Some Principles of Fiction. London. 1953
28. Lodge, David. Language of Fiction. London. 1966.
29. " " The Novelist at the Crossroads. London. 1971
30. Lubbock, Percy. The Craft of Fiction. London. 1921
31. Richard, I. A. Principles of Literary Criticism.
32. Raban, Jonathan. The Technique of Modern Fiction. London.
1968.

33. Sartre, Jean, P. What is Literature? London. 1950
34. Scholes, Robert. Elements of Fiction. London 1968
35. Shorer, Mark. Technique as Discovery. New York. 1952
36. Serrano, Miguel. C. G. Jung & Herman Hesse. A period of two friendships. London 1966.
37. Trilling, L. The Liberal Imagination. London 1951
38. Ullmann, Stephen. Styles in the French Novel. Cambridge 1957
39. Waidson, H. M. The Modern German Novel. 1945-1965
40. Warren, Austin & Rene Welleck. Theory of Literature. New York. 1949
41. Watt, Ian. The Rise of the Novel. London. 1967
42. West, Ray, B. The Art of Writing Fiction. New York 1968
43. Williams, Raymond. The English Novel from Dickens to Lawrence. London. 1970

Works of criticism and history on Sinhalese Literature:

1. Abeysingha, W. A. K. Jayatilakage Navakata. Colombo. 1964
2. De Mel, Lal P. Sahitya Muhunu. Colombo. 1959
3. De Silva, Kristy Simhala Navakata Vicaraya ha Muladharmā. Colombo. n.d.
4. De Silva, K. H. Simhala Navakatave Purogamiya. 1966
5. Godakumbura, C. E. Sinhalese Literature. Colombo 1955
6. Gunatilaka, & Karunaratna. Nutana Simhala Gadya Sahityaya. Colombo 1966
7. Gunawardana, A. J. Simhala Navakatave Vardhanaya. Colombo 1963
8. Hapuaracci, V. Martin Vikramasinghage Navakata ha ketikata vicaraya. Maharagama. 1961
9. Jayaweera, Nandasena. Simhala Navakata Vicarya. Colombo. 1962
10. Kulasuriya, Ananda Simhala Sahityaya. Vol. 1 & 2 Maharagama 1961
11. Rajakaruna, Ariya Simhala navakatave Arambhaya. Colombo 1972
12. " " Sahityaruciya ha navakata Viaraya Colombo. 1970

13. Sannasgala, P.B. Simhala Sahitya Vansaya. 1947
14. Saratchandra, E.R. The Sinhalese Novel. Colombo 1950
15. " " Sinhala Navakata Itihasaya ha Vicaraya
Colombo. 1968
16. Saratchandra, W. Simhala Navakatavata Manga Padima.
Kandy 1970
17. Suravira, A.V. Simhala Sahitya Sampradaya. Colombo. 1966
18. Tilakaratna, M.P. Rusiyanu navakatava ha vartamana simhala
navakatava ha ketikatava. Colombo. 1969
19. Vimansa. Special number on Sinhalese fiction.
Editors: D. Udayadhamma, I. Abeyvira and
S. Balasuriya. Vidyalankara University 1964
20. Vikramasingha, Martin. Sinhalese Literature. Colombo. 1949
21. " Simhala navakata ha japan kamakata
hevanalla. Colombo. 1969.

Sinhalese Translations of the Holy Bible:

1. The Holy Bible, translated into Sinhalese, (begun by W. Tolfrey
and continued by B. Clough, J. Chater, A. Armour,
W. Fox and others Wesleyan and Baptist Mis-
sionaries) and printed under the direction
of the Colombo Auxiliary Bible society.
in 4 volumes. Colombo. 1819-20
2. Suddhavu Baibalaya. Cotta Version .tr. S. Lambrick, J. Selkirk
and others. Church mission perss. Cotta
1834
3. Suddhavu Baibalaya. Colombo. 1860 (A revised edition of the
version of 1817-30)
4. " " Colombo. 1885 (A revised edition of the
version of 1860)
5. " " (A revised edition of the version of
1885) 1890

Translations of the New Testament.

1. Het heylige Evangelium onses Heeren en Zaligmaker Jesu Christi, na da beschryvinge van...Mattheus, Marcus, Lucas en Joannes, uyt het oirspronkelyke Grieks in de Singalesche Tale, Overgebragt (by Willem Konyn) en behoortlyk gerevideert (by J.P.Wetzel).Colombo.1739-76
2. Vyavahara vacana valin pitapat karanda yedunavu suddhavu matev visin livvavu yahapat arancivalya.tr. Rev.S.Lambrick. Cotta 1826.

Classical Sinhalese prose works.

1. Amāvatura. ed. K.Gnānālōka. Colombo.1959
2. Butsarana. ed. Vālivīṭṭiyē Sōrata. 6th impression.1966
3. Dhampiyā Aṭuvā Gāṭapadaya. ed. D.B. Jayatilaka. Colombo 1932
4. Pansiya panas Jātaka pota. ed. M. Gunānanda. Colombo. 1909-28
5. Pūjāvaliya. ed. W.Dhammānanda. Colombo.1903-08
6. Saddharmaratnāvaliya. ed. D.B.Jayatilaka. Colombo.1928
7. Saddharmālankaraya. e.d. K.Gnānavimala. Colombo.1948
8. Saddharmaratnākaraaya. ed. Vimalakīrti. Colombo.1912
9. Sikhavalaṇḍa vinisa. ed. D.B. Jayatilaka. Colombo 1934
10. Sārārtha Sangrahaya. ed.P.C. Gunasekara.Colombo.1910.
11. Simhala Kaḍayim ha Vittipot. ed.Marambe Raṭē mahatmaya. Kandy. 1926

Sinhalese translations of some English and Sanskrit works.
(late 19th century.)

1. Arabi Yāmini Vilāsaya. tr. by D.M. Abhayasekara.Colombo.1891
2. Arabi Nisollāsaya. tr.by N.S. Fernando. Colombo.1891.
3. Kristiyāni kārayāge vandanāgamana.(Sinhalese version of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. Translator's name not given) Colombo.1895
4. Rāmāyanaya hevat Rāvana Samharaya.Colombo 1886

Works of Fiction: Sinhalese.

1. Amarasekara, Gunadāsa (b.1929):

Karumakkārayo (1955)
Yali Upannemi (1960)
Depānoladdo (1961)
Gandhabba Apadanaya (1964)

2. Gunasingha, Siri (b.1925):

Hevanālla (1960)

3. Jayatilaka, K. (b.1926):

Parājitayo (1960)
Aprasanna Katāvak (1963)
Carita Tunak (1963)
Delovaṭa Nāti Aya (1964)
Pitāmaha (1966)
Adhistāna (1967)
Kālō Ayante (1965)

4. Jinadāsa, A.T.C:

Baddha Vairaya Hevat Nānda Saha Leli(1923)
Jayaratna Hevat Nirbhīta Bāladaṣaya(1925)
Jilakā Hevat Nirbhīta Taruniya (1930)

5. Liyanāracci, Hemaratna (b.1938):

Pādaḍayakugen (1965)
Antima Dā (1967)

6. Mahendra, Sunanda (b.1938):

Hevanāli Āda Minissu (1964)
Guruvarayakuge Katāva(1965)
Eya Mesē Siduviya (1967)
Vālmiki Obaṭa Kīve Sītā (1968)

7. Munidāsa, Hemapala. (1903-1957):

Prasādasimha (1924)
Vayala Hevat Bihisunu Ranabima (1925)
Malavun Atara Jivitaya (1934)

8. Perera, M.C.F. (1879-1922):

- Magē Karume (1906)
- Magē Pembari (1907)
- Lankā Abhirahas (1907)
- Siri Mādura (1908)
- Vināsavu Navkāva (1910)
- Lalitā Hevat Ratna Mānikyaya (1911)

9. Perera, Tenneson (b.1940):

- Duṭṭhagāmini Nomalavagayi (1970)

10. Ranavira, Ēva:

- Lāyisā (1967)

11. Ratnāyaka, Maḍavala. (b.1929):

- Akkara Paha (1959)
- Sitanāti Baṃbalova (1961)
- Pānen Añdurata (1963)

12. Samarakoon, R.R.:

- Dehadak Atara (1965)
- Gāhaniyakage Caritayak (1966)
- Ek Sabhya Katāvaka (1969)
- Gē Kurullo (1971)

13. Saratchandra, Edirivīra (b.1914):

- Malagiya Ātto (1959)
- Malavunge Avurudu Dā (1965)
- Valmatvī Hasarak Nudutim (1962)
- Lokuputā Nohot Baṇḍulage Parāvartaya (1971)

14. De Silva, Albert. (1866-1919):

- Vimalā (1892)
- Ādara Hasuna (1892)
- Siribari (1894)
- Vesak Dutaya (1894)

15. De Silva, Isaac. (1894-1907):

- Vāsananta Saha Kālakanni Pavul. (1866-88)

16. De Silva, Simon. (1874-1920):

Mīna (1905)
Terīsa (1907)
Apē Āgama (1910)

17. De Silva, Sugatapāla (b.1928)

Bitti Hatara 1963

18. Silva, W.A. (1890-1957):

Siriyalata Hevat Anāta Taruniya (1909)
Lakṣmi Hevat Nonāsena Rājiniya (1922)
Hiṅgana Kollā (1923)
Pāsai Guruvārī (1924)
Deyyanne Raṭe saha Tavat Katā (1927)
Kālāhaṇḍa (1933)
Sunetrā nohot Avicāra Samaya (1936)
Daiva Yōgaya (1936)
Vijayabākolloya (1938)
Radala Piliruva (1939)
Haṇḍapāṇa (1941)
Jūli Hata (1941)
Ridī Havadiya (n.d.
circa.1955)

19. Sirisēna, Piyadāsa (1875-1946):

Vasanāvanta Vivāhaya Hevat Rosalin
Saha Jayatissa (1906)
Apaṭa Vecca Dē (1909)
Mahā Viyavula (1909)
Taruniyakage Prēmaya (1910)
Sri Lankā Mātā (1922)
Sucaritādarsaya (1926)
Adbhūta Āgantukayā (1928)
Cintāmānikya Ratnaya (1930)

contd./-

Yantam Gālavuna (1934)
 Parivartanaya (1934)
 Pasan Nivasa (1936)
 Palamuvana Pāsala (1938)
 Antima Kāmatta (n.d.)
 Dingirimenikā Hevat Vikrama Pālage
 Palamuvana Vikramaya (1918)
 Vimalatissa Hāmuduruvange Mudal Peṭṭiya
 Hevat Vikramapālage Devani Vikramaya (1919)
 Valavvaka Palahilavva Hevat Vikramapālage
 Tunvana Vikramaya (1921)
 Iṣṭadeviya Hevat Vikrama Pālage
 Hataraveni Vikramaya (1925)
 Maheśvarī Hevat Vikramapālage Pasveni
 Vikramaya. (1936)
 Debara Kella Hevat Vikramapālage
 Hayaveni Vikramaya (1944)

20. Swarnalatā.M.M:

Kaṇḍulen Sināven Torava Vālalimi (1969)

21. Vālivita, Alexander:

Horungē Guhāva (1913)
 Lilige Ādara Hasuna (1914)
 Taruniyak Soyāyāma (1927)
 Simhala Lansī Vivāhaya (1927)

22. Vimalanāta, N.G.A:

Mayāsopnaya (1929)
 Vanapuspayā Hevat Aśōkamala (1929)
 Sisiliyāge Panividāya (1928)
 Sisiliyāge Vivāhaya (1929)
 Premarasaya Hevat Somage Rudhira pūjāva (1929)
 Tanuta Sāpayā (1930)
 Pōṣhita Prēmaya Nohot Anurāgaye
 Rahasa (1930)

Mangala Yātrava Nohot Sāgarika (1930)
 Pativrataya Hevat Sōma (1931)
 Anuratiya Nohot Anulā (1931)
 Kōmalapani Hevat Snēhaye Ulpata (1932)
 Sumanāge Puduma Gālavima Nohot
 Māraka Diyamantiya (1948)
 Taruniyakagē Antima Kāmatta Nohot
 Somāvati. (1948)

23. Wickramasingha, Martin. (b.1891):

Līla (1914)
 Sōmā Hevat Nitya Prēmaya (1920)
 Ayirangini Hevat Pāpōccaranaya (1923)
 Sītā (1923)
 Miriṅgudiya (1925)
 Rōhini (1929)
 Gamperaliya (1944)
 Yugāntaya (1949)
 Virāgaya (1956)
 Kaliyugaya (1957)
 Karuvalagedara (1965)
